

STARS AND STRIPES[®]

Dolly Parton hits the road after 10-year hiatus

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Steelers knock another team from unbeaten ranks

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TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2004

U.S. launches major offensive on Fallujah

- Thousands of soldiers, Marines pound city from land and air
- Casey: Insurgents will use car bombs, IEDs to thwart forces

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Marines of the 1st Division take position Monday on the outskirts of Fallujah.

AP

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Sept. 11 compensation: Victims of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks received \$38.1 billion in compensation, with insurance companies picking up the largest portion of the tab, according to a study released Monday.

The report by Rand Institute for Social Justice found that injured civilians and the families of those who were killed have received an average of \$3.1 million per person from the government, charities and insurance companies.

First responders received an average of \$1.1 million more than civilians with similar economic losses, the study found.

Hinckley freedom: A lawyer for John Hinckley Jr. told a federal judge Monday his client no longer is mentally ill and should be allowed longer unsupervised visits away from the mental hospital where he has lived since trying to assassinate President Ronald Reagan in 1981.

Attorney Barry Levine accused government of lawyers of fear-mongering by opposing Hinckley's release on grounds he remains a danger to the community.

Business

Enron deliberations: The resumption of jury deliberations on sentencing five men convicted of having roles in pushing through Enron Corp.'s late 1999 sham sale of power barges to Merrill Lynch & Co. were postponed Monday for a day because of a sick juror, court officials said.

The deliberations by the jury of six men and six women were postponed until Tuesday. The jurors wrapped up after 2½ hours Friday without reaching any conclusions.

The jury's duty is an advisory role in a sentencing phase added by U.S. District Judge Ewing Werlein because of a yet-unresolved dispute before the Supreme Court over federal sentencing guidelines.

Microsoft settlements: Clearing more legal challenges, Microsoft Corp. announced important settlements Monday with rival Novell Inc. for \$336 million and with a Washington-based trade organization that had aggressively backed landmark antitrust cases against Microsoft by the U.S. government and European Union.

Novell and the trade group, the Computer and Communications Industry Association, agreed to pull out of the legal case against Microsoft in the European Union, which earlier this year declared Microsoft guilty of abusing its dominant position in the technology industry. A key ruling on sanctions against Microsoft is expected as early as this month.

But in a surprise move that will extend Microsoft's courtroom headaches, Novell said it intends to file its own antitrust lawsuit against Microsoft in federal court in Utah this week.

World

EU constitution referendum: Former Czech President Vaclav Havel said Monday the Czech Republic should not hold a referendum on the European Union constitution. "What would the people vote about, whether they like a certain graph, chapter, the preamble?" Havel said.

EU leaders signed the charter last month in Rome, following 28 months of acrimonious debate between governments of the 25 member states. All EU member countries must now ratify the constitution for it to



Castro's tumble: Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, left, and Venezuelan Minister of Energy and Mines Rafael Ramirez, right, paid a visit to Cuba on Sunday to visit with Cuban President Fidel Castro, who is wheelchair-bound after shattering his left kneecap and breaking his right arm in a fall last month.

come into force.

Iran nuclear power: Iran said Monday a preliminary agreement reached between Iran and the European Union's three big powers may be finalized soon, but hard-liners criticized the deal and called on the government to ignore calls to keep suspending nuclear activities.

The preliminary agreement worked out Sunday in Paris with Britain, France and Germany needs to be approved by all four countries involved in the talks.

If approved, the deal would be a major breakthrough after months of threats and negotiations and could spare Iran from being taken before the U.N. Security Council, where the United States has warned it would seek economic sanctions unless Tehran gives up all uranium enrichment activities, a technology that can produce nuclear fuel or atomic weapons.

U.N. hostages: Afghan government ministries searching for three kidnapped U.N. workers have yet to receive a list of prisoners who Taliban-linked militants want released in return for the hostages' lives, officials said Monday.

Spokesmen for Jaish-ul-Muslimeen, or Army of Muslims, said Sunday that they had handed a list of 26 prisoners, some possibly in U.S. custody at Guantanamo Bay, to government negotiators.

But two government officials told The Associated Press on Monday that they had no word on any contact with the kidnappers and had not received any such list.

Madrid terrorism arrests: A judge on Monday jailed two Algerians and a Moroccan for their suspected ties to a radical Islamic cell that allegedly plotted to blow up a court and other buildings in Spain, officials said.

The decision brought to 33 the number of people charged and jailed in what authorities say was a plot to slam a truck loaded with 1,100 pounds of explosives into Madrid's National Court, the country's center of anti-terror investigations.

Macedonian referendum: An international monitoring mission declared that a weekend referendum on legislation granting self-rule to minority ethnic Albanians

in Macedonia met democratic standards, contrary to opposition parties' claims of fraud.

However, Macedonian election authorities declared the ballot's results invalid because voter turnout was just 26.2 percent, well below the 50 percent minimum needed. Hard-line opposition parties have vowed to challenge the turnout figures in court, alleging widespread irregularities.

Pitcairn Island sex scandal: Pitcairn Island has selected its first female mayor in its 214-year history after the former leader of the remote Pacific community was fired following his conviction on sex charges, British authorities said Monday.

The seven-member governing council on the isolated island, first settled by mutineers from the HMS Bounty, unanimously chose Brenda Christian, the sister of former Mayor Steve Christian, to fill the post until a Dec. 15 election, British High Commission spokesman Bryan Nicolson said.

Brenda Christian is the island's former police officer.

Japan earthquake: A strong earthquake rocked northern Japan on Monday near the area where the country's deadliest quake in a decade struck last month. At least eight people were injured.

The 5.9-magnitude quake, which hit at 11:16 a.m., was centered close to the earth's surface in the Chetsu area of Niigata state, the Meteorological Agency said. It was considered an aftershock to the 6.8-magnitude tremor that hit on Oct. 23, the agency said.

Pope gunman: A Turkish court on Monday reduced the prison term for the man who shot Pope John Paul II, enabling him to be released at the end of next year, his lawyer said.

Mehmet Ali Agca was extradited to Turkey in 2000 after serving almost 20 years in Italy for the 1981 shooting of the pope. His motives for that shooting remain unclear.

He was immediately sent to prison to serve a 10-year sentence for murdering a Turkish journalist in 1979 and was separately sentenced to seven years and four months for two robberies in Turkey the same year.

Stories and photo from wire services

Correction

A Page 1 headline in Monday editions incorrectly stated conditions in Iraq. The Iraqi government has declared a 60-day state of emergency.

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U.S. forces launch attack on Fallujah

Assault by 10,000 troops aims to put end to guerrilla control in city

BY JIM KRANE
The Associated Press

NEAR FALLUJAH, Iraq — Thousands of U.S. troops, backed by armor and a stunning air barrage, attacked the toughest strongholds of Sunni insurgents in Fallujah on Monday, launching a long-awaited offensive aimed at putting an end to guerrilla control of the Sunni Muslim city.

After nightfall, U.S. troops advanced slowly on the northwest-Jordan neighborhood, a warren of alleyways where Sunni militant fighters have dug in. Artillery, tanks and warplanes pounded the district's northern edge, softening the defenses and attempting to set off any bombs and boobytraps before troops moved in.

At the same time, another force pushed into the northeastern Askari district, the first large-scale assault into the insurgent-held area of the city, the military said.

Orange explosions lit up the palm trees, minarets and dusty rooftops of Jordan, and a fire burned on the city's edge. Some 5,000 U.S. Marines and soldiers were massed in the desert on Fallujah's northern edge participating in the assault. A smaller number of Iraqi troops were also expected to be involved, but there was no immediate word on their actions.

Before the full-frontal attack against the city's northern defenses, the U.S. military reported its first casualties of the offensive: two Marines killed when their bulldozer flipped over into the Eu-



U.S. Marines of the 1st Division take position on the outskirts of Fallujah, Iraq, on Monday in preparation for a major assault on the city.

phrates. A military spokesman estimated that 42 insurgents were killed across Fallujah in bombardment and skirmishes during the day.

Earlier Monday, U.S. and Iraqi forces seized two bridges over the Euphrates River and a hospital on Fallujah's western edge that they said was under insurgents' control. A team of Marines entered northwest Fallujah and seized an apartment building.

Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi said he gave the green light for international and Iraqi forces

to launch the long-awaited offensive against Fallujah, aimed at re-establishing government control before elections set for January. He also announced a round-the-clock curfew in Fallujah and another nearby insurgent stronghold, Ramadi.

"The people of Fallujah have been taken hostage... and you need to free them from their grip," he told Iraqi soldiers who swarmed around him during a visit to the main U.S. base outside Fallujah just before the attack began.

"May they go to hell!" the sol-

diers shouted, and Allawi replied: "To hell they will go."

Marine commanders have warned the new offensive could bring the heaviest urban fighting since the Vietnam war. Some 10,000 U.S. Marines, Army soldiers and Iraqi forces are around Fallujah, where commanders estimate around 3,000 insurgents are dug in. More than half the civilian population of some 300,000 people is believed to have fled already.

U.S. commanders have avoided any public estimate on how long it

SEE IRAQ ON PAGE 4

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Sunday, at least 1,129 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 865 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is four higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated Friday.

The British military has reported 73 deaths. Italy has reported 19; Poland, 13; Spain, 11; Ukraine, nine; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each. Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary and Latvia have reported one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 991 U.S. military servicemen have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 756 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ One U.S. soldier was killed Sunday by a convoy attack west of Baghdad.

■ One U.S. soldier was killed Sunday by a car bomb in western Baghdad.

The latest identifications reported by the Defense Department:

■ No identifications reported.

U.S. leader warns of insurgents' use of car bombs

Gen. Casey expects house-to-house fighting after initial U.S. attack

BY BLISA BURGESS
Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — Insurgents are planning to use car bombs and improvised explosive devices early in the fight for Fallujah, then retreat into the labyrinthine city center and fight house-to-house, the top U.S. commander in Iraq said Monday.

Speaking to Pentagon reporters via telephone from his offices in Baghdad, Gen. George W. Casey Jr., who is commander, Multi-National Force-Iraq, spoke just hours after the long-anticipated mass assault on the city began.

The press reported the name of the Fallujah fight as "Operation Phantom Fury" — "Phantom Force" being a nickname for the Army's III Corps.

But Casey said the operation has in fact been named "Al Fajjar" the Iraqi word for "dawn," at the request of the country's prime minister, Ayad Allawi.

Casey refused to say precisely how many coalition fighters are involved in the Fallujah operation, but admitted that one reporter's estimate of 15,000 was "in the right ballpark."

Included in the fight are U.S. soldiers and Marines, as well as Iraqi forces and the United Kingdom's Black Watch Regiment, which is "working along western bank of Euphrates River to disrupt (insurgent fighters') movements towards Baghdad," Casey said.

How many opponents they will face remains unknown, Casey said.

"We've been watching this fairly closely," Casey said. "I think there are people who have moved out, I think there are people who have moved in."

Yet even though "I don't have a specific number on the number of enemy who have left; I expect we will have a fight in there over the next few days," Casey said.

Insurgents are armed with "a range of weapons," Casey said, including AK-47 semi-automatic weapons, machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades and some anti-aircraft weapons.

However, the insurgents' "weapons of choice are improvised explosive devices and car bombs," Casey said.

"Our [intelligence analysts] tell us they [the insurgents] have lined the streets with IEDs," Casey said.

Coalition forces also as "expect them to come at us with car bombs," Casey said.

"What we generally see is an outer crust of defense," Casey said.

Then the insurgents "will fall back into the center of the city, where they will be a major confrontation."

Casey said that he has not heard reports by an embedded National Public Radio reporter

that said one Iraqi unit that was supposed to fight shrank by hundreds of men over the weekend.

However, Casey said, he had heard "one report" of some Iraqi fighters refusing to return to their units for the Fallujah fight. The loss of the Iraqi fighters would not impact the fight, Casey said.

There are also more than 200,000 civilians living in Fallujah, Casey said, but an unknown number of citizens have evacuated the city over the past few weeks, at the urging of coalition forces.

"Our estimates [are that] 50 [percent] to 70 percent of the population have moved out," Casey said, saying that the estimates are based on "signatures" that are "generated... during darkness."

Other estimates have calibrated that as much as one-third of the civilian population remains in the city, however.

Casey is responsible not only for overseeing the U.S.-led military operation, but also for interacting with the interim Iraqi government that took over June 30.



Gen. George W. Casey Jr.

Casey, the Army's vice chief of staff since October 2003, was nominated for his current position in June. After Senate approval, the four-star general took his post in Iraq on July 1.

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Alawi: Emergency decree aimed at rebels

BY KATARINA KRATOVAČ

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — As U.S. and Iraqi troops assaulted Fallujah on Monday, Iraq's interim prime minister said his government's state of emergency declaration will impose a round-the-clock curfew in insurgent strongholds and temporary closures of borders and the Baghdad airport.

Prime Minister Ayad Allawi strongly objected to media descriptions of the decree announced Sunday as martial law and stressed the steps were being taken only to curb the insurgency and not clamp down on civil liberties.

On Sunday, the government announced a 60-day state of emergency was being imposed throughout the country except in Kurdish-controlled areas of the north. That worried some Iraqis, who are still recovering from decades of Saddam Hussein's dictatorship, but it appeared the crackdown would be applied primarily in Fallujah and nearby Ramadi.

Spelling out details at a news conference, Allawi said round-the-clock curfews were to take effect in Fallujah and Ramadi starting at sundown Monday and that all roads into the two cities would be closed. No residents may carry weapons, and government offices were ordered closed except for emergency services like hospitals and the fire department.

In addition, Allawi said Iraq was temporarily closing its borders with Syria and Jordan, allowing in only trucks carrying food and other "emergency deliveries." Baghdad International Airport would close



Iraq Prime Minister Ayad Allawi speaks at a press conference in Baghdad on Monday. Allawi announced that he has authorized the Fallujah offensive by international and Iraqi forces, and that emergency measures would be imposed on the insurgent strongholds of Fallujah and Ramadi.

for 48 hours, he said.

Allawi said he approved the major offensive against Fallujah by U.S. troops and Iraqi forces as the best way to take the city back from insurgents.

"They think Iraq now is now weak, but I warn them from this platform that hours of seriousness have begun," Allawi said of the insurgents. "I will never permit anyone to inflict harm on the Iraqi people, whether

they are foreign terrorists or Saddam loyalists."

His news conference came after some Iraqi expressed alarm about the state of emergency.

"The core question here is what if the problems are not over following the coming 60 days," the newspaper Azassman said in an editorial Monday. "Would Iraq go into a new emergency law then? What are

the remaining solutions for the Iraqi government in case security continues to deteriorate?"

Other Iraqis welcomed the decree. "The security situation requires such a law," Hamed al-Bayati, spokesman of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, said. "There was a need for quick action for the stability in Iraq."

In the newspaper Al-Sabah, Editor in Chief Mohammed Abdul Jabbar wrote that the state of emergency is "the medicine to heal the crisis in an efficient way."

U.S. troops and forces of Allawi's interim government are trying to suppress the insurgency so national elections can be held as planned by the end of January.

Many prominent figures in the Sunni Muslim minority, which means the core of the insurgency have warned that the crackdown could trigger a backlash among Sunnis.

Allawi, a former member of Saddam's Baathist party, comes from the majority Shiite Muslim community that was long oppressed by the Sunni Arabs. He is widely expected to run in the January elections and seek a new term as prime minister.

During the news conference, Allawi angrily dismissed a call by 26 Saudi Arabian clerics and religious scholars urging Iraqis to violently resist U.S. forces and their Iraqi allies.

"Killing the innocents is now identified as resistance?"

Allawi snapped when asked about the Saudi letter. "The strategy here are killing people in Saudi Arabia and they are also the ones who kill people in Iraq."

Associated Press correspondent Maggie Michael contributed to this report from Baghdad.

Blair backs Fallujah attack

LONDON — Prime Minister Tony Blair on Monday pledged to "hold firm" in Iraq and said the massive U.S.-led assault against insurgents in Fallujah was necessary to ensure elections could go ahead in the country.

Blair said that if the Sunni Muslim city remained outside the control of Iraq's interim government, elections scheduled for January next year could be damaged.

"Defeat of terrorism in Iraq is defeat for this new and virulent form of global terrorism everywhere," Blair told the House of Commons. "A democratic Iraq is the last thing the terrorists want to see. It is precisely for that reason, because victory for the terrorists would damage security round the world including here in Britain, that we have to hold firm, be resolute and see this through, including in Fallujah."

Sunni politician speaks out

BAGHDAD — A prominent Sunni politician added his voice Monday to a growing opposition to the American-led offensive against Fallujah, saying the use of violence "will lead to very strong reactions and will inflame hatred and resentment."

In an interview with Al-Arabiya satellite network, former Iraqi foreign minister Adnan Pachachi said: "I said and I am still saying that the use of force should be only exerted at the time of extreme necessity."

Pachachi, a member of the former Iraqi governing council, was one of the few voices calling for a halt to the U.S. siege of Fallujah during April.

Pachachi, considered pro-U.S., had denounced the earlier American attack on Fallujah, which he said had killed four U.S. contract workers and a mob dragged their mutilated bodies through the streets and hung two of them from a bridge.

From The Associated Press

Iraq: U.S. forces take Fallujah hospital

IRAQ, FROM PAGE 3

may take to capture Fallujah, where insurgents fought the Marines to a standstill last April in a three-week siege.

As the main assault began in Fallujah, thunderous explosions could be heard across central Baghdad, some 40 miles to the east.

Militants bombed an Orthodox Christian church in the capital, killing three people and wounding 34, police said.

A U.S. soldier was killed when his patrol was fired on in eastern Baghdad, the military said.

The prelude to the Fallujah offensive was a crushing air and artillery bombardment of the city that built from the night before, though Monday morning and evening then rose to a crescendo by Monday night — with U.S. jets dropping bombs constantly and big guns pounding the city every few minutes with high-explosive shells.

When the ground assault began, U.S. forces who were dug into the desert north of the city hammered the Jordan district with airstrikes and intense tank fire to soften up defenses, said AP reporter Edward Harris, embedded with the Marines there.

The Marines reported that at least initially they did not draw significant fire from insurgents, only a few rocket-propelled grenades that caused no casualties.

Throughout the day, masked insurgents roamed the streets of Fallujah. One group of four fighters, two of them draped with belts of ammunition, moved through narrow streets, firing on U.S. forces with small arms and mortars.

Early Monday, U.S. troops surrounded the area of Fallujah General Hospital, just outside the city on the western bank of the Euphrates River. Iraqi forces swept into the facility, blasting open doors and handcuffing patients, who were pulled into the halls in a search for gunmen.

At the hospital, four foreigners, includ-



A U.S. soldier breaks open a door as troops enter the hospital in Fallujah, Iraq, on Monday in this image made available to television.

ing two Moroccans and two unidentified people, were captured, the U.S. military said.

One main goal for taking the hospital first was likely to control information. The facility was the main source of Iraqi death tolls during the first U.S. siege of Fallujah in April, and U.S. commanders accused doctors there of exaggerating numbers, fueling public outrage that eventually forced the Marines to pull back from the city at that time.

The U.S. military said Monday that insurgents controlling the hospital were "forcing the doctors there to release propaganda and false information."

The Association of Muslim Scholars, an influential Sunni clerics group that has threatened to boycott elections, condemned the assault on Fallujah, calling it

"an illegal and illegitimate action against civilian and innocent people."

The length and ferocity of the battle depends greatly on whether the bulk of the defenders, believed to be Iraqis from the Fallujah area, decide to risk the destruction of the city or try to slip away in the face of overwhelming force. Foreign jihadis may choose to fight to the end, but it's unclear how many of them are still in the city.

Another issue is the role of Iraqi forces fighting alongside the Americans. A National Public Radio correspondent embedded with the Marines outside Fallujah reported desertions among the Iraqis. One Iraqi battalion shrunk from over 500 men down to 170 over the past two weeks — with 285 members quitting over the weekend, the correspondent said.

Associated Press correspondents Tini Tran, Mari-Kate O'Rourke and Maggie Michael in Baghdad contributed to this report.



A soldier with 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment stands outside his Stryker during a mission in Mosul, Iraq. Every soldier who has left the wire has experienced engagement with enemy forces and many serious fighting. The battalion arrived in Iraq three weeks ago.

PHOTOS BY JULIANA GITTNER
Stars and Stripes

1-24th soldiers greeted with combat in Iraq

Nearly all units have seen action less than one month after entering country

BY JULIANA GITTNER
Stars and Stripes

FORWARD OPERATING BASE MAREZ, Iraq — After less than a month in Iraq, nearly every unit in the 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment has seen action.

Several 1-24th soldiers, members of the 25th Infantry Division's Stryker Brigade Combat Team, will get Purple Hearts, and hundreds already have qualified for the Combat Infantryman Badge.

A few weeks ago, less than 5 percent of the battalion's light infantry soldiers had any combat experience. But an abrupt and forceful introduction to life near Mosul, a city in northern Iraq, caused that percentage to grow exponentially.

A few days after arriving, a mortar slammed through an aluminum trailer where a soldier lived. Fortunately, the soldier was not in it.

Mortar rounds continue to hit the small camp daily. Outside the wire, explosives have engulfed vehicles and gunfire has sprayed around soldiers on patrol.

Still, they seem untrifled in their new environment.

"It's not as bad as I thought it would be," said Spc. Steven Chelossi, a Stryker driver for Company C. "I didn't expect full combat, but I was expecting more fire. I was expecting a lot more action."

Mortars landing 100 yards away scarcely raise an eyebrow these days.

"We really did a good job of preparing everyone before coming over here," said battalion commander Lt. Col. Erik Kurilla. "For six months we talked about it."

The previous battalion sent updates and experiences along with mission briefings so the 1-24th soldiers back in Fort Lewis, Wash., could train with real-life scenarios.

Soldiers arrived knowing the hazards and expecting a combat lifestyle.

"The living conditions are a little bit better than I thought they would be," said Staff Sgt. Mark Owens with the headquarters company. He expected to live in a tent with field showers, the way things were during his time in the first Gulf War.

"The first time we had to make [the showers] ourselves," he said. Here, the showers are in trailers, and they are cleaned daily.

Soldiers expected to miss family and have few places to go off duty, but they didn't expect the gut-wrenching adjustments they'd have to make after they arrived. About 50 soldiers have contracted stomach bugs or respiratory illnesses.

About five soldiers a day visit the medical aid center with serious diarrhea. They want something to get them back out on

missions fast.

"The guys unfortunately can't stay home for the day and get over it," said Capt. Bradley Warr, the battalion's physician assistant.

Medical staff have given out cases of hand sanitizer and reminded troops of the consequences of poor hygiene to overcome the problem.

"It's kind of like school kids, a lot of people touching things and not taking care of themselves," Warr said. "Nothing that we didn't anticipate."

Despite combat, illness and separation from home, soldiers rate their short experience pretty high.

"I've never eaten so much ice cream in my life,"

said Carr, praising the chow hall. Many soldiers have built porches outside their trailers and added carpeting inside.

They could do with a few more telephones to call home and a real post exchange for supplies, Chelossi said. But in general, the first month has been fine, mortars and all.

"It's a lot better than we thought," he said, adding one caveat: "It smells. I didn't expect that."

E-mail Juliana Gittner at: gittnerj@spisrps.osd.mil



Soldiers with 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment stand vigilant during a morning search of a neighborhood in Mosul, Iraq.

*Mortars
landing 100
yards away
scarcely raise
an eyebrow
these days.*

Koizumi: Japanese troops are not in combat zone

The Associated Press

TOKYO — Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said Monday he does not consider the part of Iraq where Japanese troops have been stationed a combat zone, even though it is within territory that the Iraqi government declared to be under a 60-day state of emergency.

Japan has deployed some 500 troops to the southern Iraqi city of Samawah to help rebuild infrastructure and provide clean water. How the area is classified is important because the Japanese law authorizing the dispatch says troops must be deployed in a noncombat zone.

Koizumi said Samawah still met this criteria even after

Sunday's state of emergency announcement, which applies throughout Iraq except Kurdish-run areas in the north.

"Our position remains the same," Koizumi told reporters. He reiterated Tokyo was still considering whether to extend the soldiers' deployment in Iraq after their one-year mandate expires on Dec. 14.

A mainichi newspaper poll Monday showed 51 percent of voters opposed continuing the mission past next month compared to 27 percent who favored staying.

Supporters of an extension narrowly exceeded opponents among Koizumi's own Liberal Democratic Party by 45 percent to 43 percent, the newspaper said.

The major daily surveyed 1,095 people over the weekend for the poll. It did not provide a margin of error.

Allawi says gunmen weren't Iraqis

BAGHDAD — Prime Minister Ayad Allawi said Monday that all the gunmen who attacked a police station in Haditha and killed policemen were all foreigners.

He also said four foreigners were arrested early Monday when U.S. and Iraqi forces took the main Fallujah hospital. Two were from Morocco and the others had not been identified.

"All the 200 gunmen who have attacked the police stations in Haditha were all foreigners from outside Iraq," he added.

Allawi said he had given the green light to U.S. and Iraqi forces to storm Fallujah to rid the city of "terrorists," including foreigners.

From The Associated Press

Feeling at home on the basketball court

The outdoor court is like one found in almost any city in the States, which is the point.

"It kind of feels like we're back home, when the league gets going and the crowd gets jumping," said Sgt. Kenyon Graham of Florence, S.C., coach of the undefeated 8th Tank Killers, one of 12 teams playing in the Camp Lemonnier league.

The games are played under the lights, outdoors and at night, thankfully, because the daytime temperature here pushes 100 degrees even in November. There's no worry about rainouts. Good crowds of friends and fellow competitors half-fill the metal bleachers for the games.

"It's definitely good for morale," Graham said.

The Killers are made up of Marine reservists called up from the Tallahassee, Fla.-based 8th Tank Battalion. In Djibouti, they are part of the 1st Provisional Security Company. They patrol the flight line, guard the gates, perform searches and generally keep the camp safe.

Graham said coaching the Killers, who were undefeated through five games, helps him be a better sergeant to his junior Marines.

"It helps me to communicate better," Graham said. "The more I play ball with them, the closer I get to them."

For 40 minutes — 20 minutes per half just like the college game — the players rest to forget about their jobs and concentrate on ball, according to Lance Cpl. Anthony D. Smith of Rochester, N.Y.

"We have something to look forward to," Smith said, "and that's the next game."

A bird in the hand

An airman found the baby bird between two buildings and brought it to the civil affairs tent. He knew a vet was there — veterinarian, that is.

"It had blood on its wings and beak," said Maj. Julie Roche, an Army reservist from Santee, Ga., and veterinarian with the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion. "It must have been just pushed out of its nest by one of its siblings."

Fed at first with a syringe, the 2-month-old raven started eating on its own last week. Chow hall food seems to work — ground Spam, tuna, kidney beans.

The bird has been dubbed DJ — short for Djibouti — by Roche's female tent mates, and Feathers by Roche's 6-year-old son, Clancy, back in the States. The little raven doesn't have tail feathers yet, so flight is probably another month away, Roche said.

Some of her male colleagues inside the civil affairs tent said the bird smells. A few threaten to eat it when it gets big enough.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Charlie Coon



As a vet, Roche will continue to do what comes naturally.

"We'll have to teach it how to fly [inside the civil affairs tent]," Roche said. "I think it'll hang around. It gets fed pretty good."

Head rubs and haircuts

The Djibouti barbers give scalp massages with a haircut. For S3, a haircut can get a high-and-tight and afterward have his head rubbed.

"There's too much stress," said Senthil Kumar, one of the barbers. "This helps blood circulation."

Marine Capt. Scott Johnson, the camp headquarters commandant, said he used to get scalp massages with the haircuts in Okinawa. Other troops said they've gotten them elsewhere in the Middle East.

"I guess it helps you relieve a little stress," Johnson said after a recent rub-down.

Lockdowns fool the enemy

The camp was in a lockdown starting Wednesday, meaning only persons with a



PHOTOS BY CHARLIE COON/Stars and Stripes

Above: Maj. Julie Roche, an Army reservist from Santee, Ga., and member of the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion, tends to a baby raven that apparently got kicked from its nest. The bird, which Roche's son named Feathers but her fellow soldiers have dubbed DJ, for Djibouti, is being nursed back to health by Roche, who is a veterinarian both with her civil affairs unit and back home in Georgia.

Left: Marine Cpl. Carl Collier of Prattburg, N.Y., and the 8th Tank Battalion of Tallahassee, Fla., goes up for a lay-up during a nighttime basketball game at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti. The camp's 12-team league plays three nights per week.

Below: Marine Capt. Scott Johnson of Camp Lejeune, N.C., commandant for Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, gets a scalp massage from Jiji Lal after his haircut on the base.

mission-essential reason could leave. Liberty into town to Djibouti City, where service-members like to patronize the restaurants and clubs, was canceled.

So, too, was a Morale, Recreation and Welfare excursion to nearby Lake Assal, the lowest point in Africa at almost 500 feet below sea level.

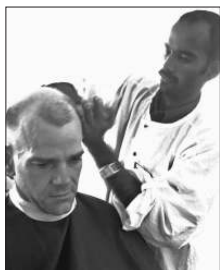
The reason given was that a security threat of some kind had been detected.

Marine Capt. Brian Dibb, the base's force protection officer, would not specify the threat. He did say that "liberty secure," the condition that restricts travel, happens once in a while and not just because a threat is detected.

"We change the picture so the enemy can't profile us," he said, adding that such decisions are usually "intelligence driven."

Even though U.S. troops haven't fired or been fired upon in Djibouti, Dibb said the area was still potentially dangerous for troops and other Westerners.

E-mail Charlie Coon at: coonc@mail.strips.osd.mil



Bosnian-based organization to trace Iraq's missing

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina — A Bosnia-based organization will help Iraqi authorities determine the fate of hundreds of thousands of people who went missing during Saddam Hussein's regime, an official said Monday.

The first agreement between the International Commission on Missing Persons has been signed with the Kurdish Regional Government in northern Iraq and further discussions are under way with Iraqi authorities, said Doune Porter, a spokeswoman for the organization in Sarajevo.

The ICMP has extensive experience

"Resolving the fate of missing persons is a crucial element in providing justice for family members and in allowing any reconciliation process to move forward."

in identifying remains of thousands of people killed in the 1992-95 Bosnian war. The organization is the only one in the world that uses DNA profiling to match blood samples from family members of missing people to bone samples found in mass graves.

The ICMP will give Iraqi au-

thorities access to its forensic data management system and organize a conference where details will be discussed. The date of the conference has not yet been set, Porter said.

The system uses an electronic database to track the whole process from identification of possible mass graves and exhumations

to notification of family members and final burial.

The technology was also used to identify people who died in the Sept. 11, 2001, strikes on the United States.

The organization estimates that between 300,000 and 1 million people went missing in Iraq during Saddam's regime.

About 270 mass grave sites have been identified in Iraq, but exhumations have begun only at the site near the Kurdish town of Hatra.

"Resolving the fate of missing persons is a crucial element in providing justice for family members and in allowing any reconciliation process to move forward," said Kathryn Bomberger, the ICMP chief of staff.

"The authorities in Iraq recognize that unless the mass graves are properly investigated, they could pose a serious threat to social cohesion for generations to come," she said.

Kathryn Bomberger
ICMP chief of staff

Bin Laden's former driver seeks delay in trial

BY PAISLEY DODDS
The Associated Press

GUANTANAMO BAY NAVAL BASE, Cuba — Lawyers for Osama bin Laden's driver are fighting to have his U.S. military trial delayed until civilian courts rule on whether the commissions, resurrected from World War II, should be revamped to give terror suspects fair trials.

The challenge before the federal courts is one of several overlapping legal proceedings creating headaches for the U.S. government and could dismantle the commissions before the first trial begins next month.

The commissions, or military trials, were set up to try suspected terrorists held at Guantanamo Bay.

Lawyers start pretrial motions hearings Monday for Salim Ahmed Hamdan, a 34-year-old Yemeni who says he earned a pardon driving the al-Qaida ringleader. Hamdan is charged with conspiracy but says he never supported terrorism and was not an al-Qaida member.

"These commissions were intended for people like Osama bin Laden, not a mechanic who drove people around," said Lt. Cmdr. Charlie Swift, Hamdan's military-appointed attorney. "The fact that we're doing this will taint the reputation of military justice for years to come."

Swift has filed a federal lawsuit, one of more than 60 similar challenges, arguing the commissions aren't legal and shouldn't have jurisdiction to try the Hamdan case.

Swift wants his federal case to be heard before Hamdan's scheduled Dec. 7 trial.

Since a U.S. Supreme Court ruling in June cleared the way for detainees to challenge their detentions in U.S. courts, civilian attorneys have started to pour into Guantanamo to meet with clients, one of whom includes Omar Khadr, a Canadian who was 15 when he arrived in 2002.

Some of the 550 prisoners from more than 40 countries have been held for nearly three years, but few have had access to attorneys and only four have been charged. If they were to win in federal court, their charges could be dismissed.

Air Force Lt. Col. Sharon Shaffer, who represents accused al-Qaida paymaster Ibrahim Ahmed Mahmoud al Qosbi, said a

habeas petition would be filed Monday in federal court in Washington alleging her Sudanese client was tortured by U.S. troops starting after he was captured by Pakistani bounty hunters in December 2001, and that he also suffered abuse at Guantanamo.

After a request nearly two months ago by The Associated Press, the U.S. military last week provided accounts of eight Guantanamo abuse cases mentioned in a congressional report, including one in which a female interrogator exposed her T-shirt, climbed on a detainee's lap and began running her fingers through his hair. Army Brig. Gen. Jay Hood, commander of the Guantanamo mission, has said lessons have been learned and prisoners are being treated humanely.

Supplies, militants cross Iran to Iraq

BY LOUIS MEIXLER
The Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey — Islamic extremists have been moving supplies and recruits from Iran into Iraq, say Iraqi Kurdish and Western officials, though it's unclear whether Tehran is covertly backing them or militants are simply taking advantage of the porous border.

Iranian involvement with extremist groups in the Iraqi insurgency would be potentially explosive, especially given the history of U.S.-Iranian animosity. U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said recently that Iran was engaged in "a lot of meddling" in Iraq but gave no details.

Iran, which shares a mountainous 800-mile border with Iraq, has confirmed that militants of the al-Qaida-linked Ansar al-Islam group illegally entered Iran from Afghanistan after the start of the U.S.-led 2001 war to oust the Taliban and destroy Osama bin Laden's terrorist training camps. But Iran's government has repeatedly denied it is backing the radicals.

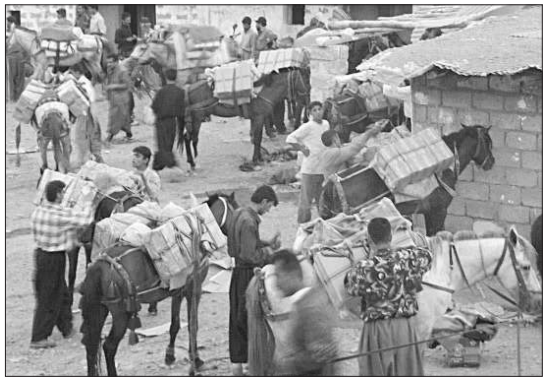
A handful of senior al-Qaida operatives who were among those fleeing to Iran after the Afghanistan war may have developed a

working relationship with a special military unit in Iran linked to Tehran's hard-liners, U.S. counterterrorism officials have said.

The report by the official U.S. commission investigating the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks also pointed to contacts between Iranian security officials and senior al-Qaida figures and found evidence that eight to 10 of the Sept. 11 hijackers passed through Iranian territory. There was, however, no evidence the Iranians knew that the hijackers were planning to attack the World Trade Center. Iraqi officials have suggested privately that Iran, which is overwhelmingly Shiite Muslim, is backing its Shiite brethren who form a slight majority in Iraq. One Iraqi official said more than 100 volunteer fighters have entered from Iran into southern Iraq, where Iran may be trying to use its influence within the dominant Shiite community there.

Iran might also support extremists from the rival Sunni branch of Islam — such as al-Qaida fighters or the group loyal to Jordanian terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi — to gain influence in the Sunni community, which is powerful in central Iraq, and to destabilize U.S. efforts to control the country, some analysts say.

Baghdad Hassan Jalal, director of security in Sulaymaniyah, the largest city in Kurdi-



Kurdish smugglers load up their horses with goods to take across the border into Iran from Hergana, Iraq, in October. Islamic extremists with ties to al-Qaida have been moving supplies and recruits from Iran into Iraq, say Iraqi, Kurdish and U.S. officials. It's unclear whether Iran is covertly backing them or militants are simply taking advantage of the porous border.

sh-controlled northern Iraq near the Iranian border, said that Islamic militants "are smuggling recruits to Iraq from Iran ... [and] then take them to Fallujah or other hot spots."

Another Kurdish official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told The Associated Press that at the start of the year, dozens of mil-

itants were crossing the mountainous, poorly patrolled border each week, but that the number had fallen sharply in the past six months.

The official said that extremists who crossed the border often headed for Mosul, the largest Arab Sunni Muslim city in the north and an area where Islamic

extremist groups are powerful. He said some of the militants have repeatedly crossed back and forth, returning to Iraq with better weapons and training.

A U.S. official said Kurdish security forces found passports from Arab countries including Yemen, Egypt and Saudi Arabia beneath a floor at one safehouse.

Iraq border arrests

BAGHDAD — Iraqi border patrols have arrested 203 Afghans who illegally crossed into the country from neighboring Iran, a border official said Monday.

The arrests took place Sunday and Monday along the desolate mountain area straddling the boundary between the two countries.

Iraq's interim authorities face a mounting task to ebb the influx of foreigners into Iraq, many of whom are suspected of joining the insurgency against the U.S.-backed government.

The Associated Press

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IN THE STATES

White House: Chief of staff Card will stay

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The White House has been mull on personnel and Cabinet changes expected in President Bush's second term, but a man at the center of the anticipated shuffle is staying.

The president asked Andrew Card to remain as White House chief of staff, the president's spokesman Scott McClellan said Monday.

"Andy Card was honored to accept," McClellan said of the 57-year-old Holbrook, Mass., native who is married to the Rev. Kathleen Card and has three children.

Promising to spend the political capital he earned on a very ambitious agenda, the president took Card and national security adviser Condoleezza Rice with him to Camp David to talk strategy.

There is much to consider: Who will be in the Cabinet? How will Bush deal with the nuclear ambitions of North Korea and the prospect that Iran will become a nuclear power? Will the insurgency in Iraq be quelled? Domestically, there's the question of how to



President Bush and his family, first lady Laura Bush, twin daughters Jenna, right, and Barbara Bush, their son, and Lindsey Lineweaver, second assistant to Mrs. Bush, second right, arrive on the South Lawn of the White House on Sunday in Washington.

push for tax, medical liability and Social Security reforms. And then there's the stalled Middle East peace effort.

Monday marked the beginning of Bush's first full week at the White House since his re-election, and he was still being lauded for his victory.

Bush received congratulatory calls from leaders in Japan, China, Turkey and South Africa and dropped in on senior staff to thank them for their hard work, McClellan said.

Bush's first week as a second term began slowly. Bush met with Defense Secretary Donald

Rumsfeld, but no public events were scheduled Monday or Tuesday and the only thing on Wednesday's calendar is a dinner. The public schedule picks up Thursday when he meets with visiting British Prime Minister Tony Blair, his steadfast ally in Iraq.

At his post-election news con-

ference Thursday, Bush acknowledged that some of his decisions were unpopular abroad. He said U.S. security interests would still drive his decision-making.

Bye added: "I will reach out to others and explain why I make the decisions I make. Whatever our past disagreements, we share a common enemy, and we have common duties to protect our peoples, to confront disease and hunger and poverty in troubled regions of the world."

Bush is under pressure from U.S. allies in Europe to play a more aggressive role in reviving the Middle East peace process. The election ballots were still being counted when Blair declared that the Mideast conflict is the most important political challenge in the world today.

There is little the Bush administration can do right away as long as Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat continues his battle with a possible terminal illness. However, down the road — especially if Arafat's eventual successor is able to temper violence and negotiate with Israel — the administration could play a role in breaking the Israeli-Palestinian standoff.

Administration looks at tax reform

Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — As the White House prepares to name a blue-ribbon panel on tax reform, the labyrinthine U.S. revenue code could face the first top-to-bottom rewrite since President Reagan closed loopholes and slashed income tax rates on a historic scale in 1986.

"This is a fundamental look at the entire code, every component of the code," a senior administration official said late last week.

Yet some political analysts and policy advocates believe the result could turn out to be considerably more modest. The commission might come up with provocative proposals, they said, but that does not mean the president will put his weight behind them.

Even if Bush decides to push for major tax revisions, he probably will be constrained by the soaring federal budget deficits that began in his first term, spurred in part by his huge tax cuts. Bush has made renewal of those cuts a high priority, stirring concern among Democrats and some Republican conservatives about the impact on the deficit. The president has said any broader program of tax reform must not worsen the deficit.

Basking in the glow of last week's electoral victory, Bush declared that revamping the tax code was at the top of his second-term domestic agenda, along with Social Security reform.

But the president offered only vague clues as to what he had in mind on taxes: The system

should be made simpler and fairer. It should encourage saving and reward risk. There should be fewer "loopholes" for special interests, he said, but existing "incentives" such as the deductions for mortgage interest and charitable contributions should be retained. And the changes, whatever they were, should not cause overall tax collections to rise.

"Simplification would be the goal," Bush said Thursday during a post-election news conference.

Administration officials said the next step in the process would be the appointment by year's end of the special commission to study reform options. Bush revealed his intention to name the group during his renomination acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention in New York last August.

The religious vote

ORLANDO, Fla. — America's conservative religious leaders, credited with providing the margin of victory for President Bush's re-election, are ready to present the White House with a bill for services rendered.

The list, they say, is a lengthy one, beginning with the nomination of U.S. Supreme Court justices who will overturn the landmark Roe v. Wade decision on abortion, increased support for a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage, and a larger role in policing decency for the Federal Communications Commission.

The Rev. Steve Smith, spokesman for First Baptist Church of Orlando, Fla., said Bush's election and his support among conservative Christians show large portions of the electorate are "grounded in traditional family values."

Paul Scroggins, executive director of the Christian service agency Vision Orlando, said social and cultural matters important to evangelicals might become more of a priority for all lawmakers if the group continues to flex its political muscle at the polls.

Although Republicans supported faith-related causes during the past four years, expectations have increased.

Rev. Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, a strong Bush supporter, predicted the proposed amendment banning gay marriage would be added to the Constitution. With White House backing, he said, it will pass the U.S. Senate by the required two-thirds majority — it has al-

ready passed in the House by a simple majority — and will be ratified by three-fourths of the nation's state legislatures.

Youth voter turnout

ST. LOUIS — Don't believe the hype about the disappointing youth vote this year.

Even as the polls closed last Tuesday, many pundits, bloggers and reporters were asking what happened to the much-ballyhoosed young voters who were supposed to turn out in huge numbers, prodded to the polls by MTV, the war in Iraq, frantic college registration drives and a close election.

But in the election aftermath, many commentators said that 18- to 29-year-olds were, once again, missing in action.

The truth is, by many measures, young people appeared to have rocked the vote as promised and showed up in large numbers — bigger even than in 1992, the last high mark for turnout among this group, according to widely cited and accepted estimates.

Researchers at the Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement estimate that 4.6 million more people under the age of 30 voted this year than in 2000, based on exit polls and early vote total results.

People misinterpreted the numbers, said Carrie Donovan, youth director at the University of Maryland research center. Some news reports said that 10 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds showed up at the polls, when in fact 10 percent of the people interviewed in exit polls were in that age group.

From The Associated Press

Poll: Voters glad to have quick election results

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Most American voters say the decisive presidential election last week has given them renewed confidence about the nation's electoral system and they're hopeful about the next four years, an Associated Press poll finds.

At the same time, they feel a sense of urgency about Iraq, their top priority for President Bush to tackle after his re-election, questioning disclosed. Iraq was followed by terrorism among voters' leading concerns.

Voters took comfort from an election that wasn't tied up in the courts, as in 2000.

"Anytime you have to wait as long as it the election did in 2000, it leaves people with doubts and a bitter taste in their mouths," said Jim Seaman, a Republican businessman from Savannahville, S.C. The poll taken in the days following the election also found that voters want Bush to cut the deficit, rather than pushing for more tax cuts.

The voters' concerns stood in contrast to the priorities Bush cited after he defeated Democratic John Kerry. Bush pledged to aggressively pursue major changes in Social Security, tax laws and medical malpractice awards. Terrorism was a chief concern both

for Bush and many voters in the poll.

"I earned capital in the campaign, political capital, and now I intend to spend it," Bush said.

More than one-fourth of respondents, 27 percent, named Iraq as the top priority for Bush's second term, ahead of terrorism, the economy and health care. Only 2 percent named taxes as a priority in the poll conducted for the AP by Ipsos-Public Affairs.

By more than a 2-1 ratio, voters said they preferred that the president balance the budget rather than reduce taxes further.

The AP-Ipsos poll of 844 registered voters was taken Nov. 3-5 and has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points.

Supreme Court won't hear felon-voting case

By HOPE YEN

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court declined Monday to hear an appeal from Washington state to stop minority felons from seeking the right to vote.

Justices left intact a 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals decision that allows six current and former inmates to challenge as racially discriminatory a Washington state law stripping them of their right to vote. The inmates now can proceed to trial.

The high court, however, also let stand a 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling in the opposite direction. That lower court rejected an appeal from convicted New York felon Jali Abdul Muntaqin, saying states should have the discretion to restrict voting rights unless Congress specifically states otherwise.

The Washington case has significant political implications, particularly given the close votes in the last two presidential elections. A victory for inmates at the Washington trial could strip lawsuits in the 47 other states — all except Maine and Vermont — that prohibit imprisoned fel-

Court decisions

The Associated Press

In developments Monday at the Supreme Court, the justices:

■ Heard arguments in two cases without Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist, who is working from home while he receives radiation and chemotherapy for thyroid cancer.

■ Refused to consider whether health insurers violate antitrust laws when they team up with doctors to adopt reimbursement policies that siphon business away from chiropractors.

■ Wrangled with a case that seeks to

clarify when police can be sued for arresting suspects on charges that later fall apart. The Washington state case being argued involves a man who sued over his arrest during a traffic stop.

■ Passed up a chance to consider whether the U.S. Coast Guard can be sued for providing questionable emergency care to an injured Florida diver who later became paralyzed.

■ Declined to review four Massachusetts discrimination cases involving judgments of thousands of dollars that employers say should have been decided by juries, not judges.

ons from voting

A similar lawsuit by 600,000 felons in Florida is pending in federal court there. That case, or another one, could give the Supreme Court another opportunity to clear up confusion.

The Washington inmates — four blacks,

one American Indian and one Hispanic — filed the lawsuit in 1996, saying the state law violates the federal Voting Rights Act by denying them equal access to the polls. Minorities are particularly hurt because they are overrepresented in the prison community, they said.

FBI: Guns, traffic killed most cops

By CURT ANDERSON

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The FBI reported Monday that 132 police officers were killed in the line of duty in 2003, with guns and traffic accidents claiming the most lives.

Of the total, which is eight deaths more than in 2002, 49 were killed in traffic accidents and 45 slain with firearms. Thirty-one of those killed with guns were wearing body armor at the time.

In all cases, the average age of the officer killed was about 37 and average level of police experience 10 years. The totals translate into one officer death every 2.8 days nationally, the FBI estimated.

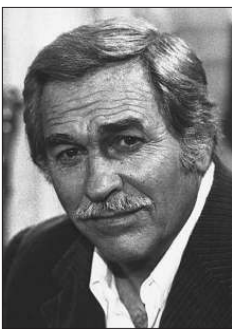
Authorities solved all the cases in 2003 of officers who were shot to death or otherwise intentionally killed. Thirty-eight suspects were arrested, 14 were killed by police and six committed suicide, according to the FBI.

About half of the officers killed intentionally were making traffic stops or arrests. Ten were slain while investigating disturbance calls, and nine were ambushed.

Twenty-eight of the 52 intentional killings and 37 of the 80 accidental deaths took place in the South, by far the deadliest region.

In addition to the officer deaths, nearly 58,000 officers were injured in 2003 while performing official duties, with more than 16,000 suffering injuries. Eight out of 10 of these attacks involved hands, fists and feet.

The report was compiled from information submitted by more than 10,000 state, local and tribal law enforcement agencies.



Actor Howard Keel, the broad-shouldered baritone who romanced his way through a series of glittery MGM musicals such as "Miss Marmalade" and "Annie Get Your Gun" and later appeared on "Dallas," died Sunday at age 85.

Musical star Keel dead at 85

By BOB THOMAS

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Howard Keel, who lent his good looks and rich baritone to such movie musicals as "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers" before reinventing himself as the mascot of westerns and later aboard TV's "Dallas," has died.

Keel died Sunday morning of colon cancer at his home in Palm Desert, according to his son, Gunnar. He was 85.

Keel starred in Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals in New York and London before being signed to an MGM contract after World War II.

He became a star with his first MGM film, playing Frank Butler to Betty Hutton's Annie Oakley in "Annie Get Your Gun."

Keel's size and lusty voice made him an ideal leading man for such stars as Esther Williams ("Pagan Love Song," "Texas Carnival," "Jupiter's Darling"), Ann Blyth ("Rose Marie," "Kismet"), Kathryn Grayson ("Show Boat," "Lovely to Look At," "Kiss Me Kate") and Doris Day ("Calamity Jane"). His own favorite film was the exuberant "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers."

When film studios went into a slump, MGM's musical factory was disbanded. Keel kept busy on the road in such surefire attrac-

The state of Washington countered that Congress never intended to protect convicted felons when it passed the Voting Rights Act.

Also, if minorities are disproportionately hurt, that is not the fault of the state law but other factors such as unfair sentencing practices, the state's legal filings say.

In its ruling last year, a three-judge panel of the 9th Circuit didn't side with the inmates, but agreed that their claims of bias deserve a full airing in court.

It noted that blacks make up about 3 percent of the state population but account for 37 percent of the "persistent offender" sentences handed down.

Nationwide, about 4.7 million people are ineligible to vote because of a felony conviction, according to The Sentencing Project, an advocacy group in Washington, D.C., a number that could easily tip the balance in a close race. Last week, President Bush topped Sen. John Kerry by about 3.5 million votes.

Of those disenfranchised because of convictions, about 1.4 million are black men.

The cases are Locke v. Farrakhan, 03-1597, and Muntaqin v. Coombe, 04-175.

tions of "Man of La Mancha," "South Pacific," "Annie Get Your Gun" and "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers."

Keel was in his early 60s and presumably nearing the end of his career when he suddenly became a star in another medium.

From its start in 1978, "Dallas" with its combination of oil, greed, sex and duplicity had become the hottest series in television. Jim Davis, who had played the role of Jock Ewing, died in 1981, and the producers needed another strong presence to stand up to the nefarious J.R. Ewing Jr. (Larry Hagman). They chose Keel.

"The show was enormous," Keel said in 1995. "I couldn't believe it. My life changed again. From being out of it, I was suddenly a star, known to more people than ever before. Wherever I went, crowds appeared again, and I started making solo albums for the first time in my career."

Keel was married and then divorced twice: to actress Rosemary Cooper and dancer Helen Anderson, with whom he had three children: Kajia, Kristine and Gunnar. In 1970 he married former airline stewardess Judy Magamoli. They had one daughter, Leslie.

He continued singing in the 1980s, explaining: "As long as I can sing halfway decent, I'd rather sing [than act]. There's nothing like being in good voice, feeling good, having good numbers to do and having a fine orchestra."

N.J. governor gives farewell speech

The Associated Press

TRENTON, N.J. — A contrite Gov. James E. McGreevey delivered a farewell address Monday in which he said he does not apologize "for being a gay American but rather for having let personal feelings impede his decision-making."

McGreevey used the speech to list several accomplishments of his administration, but the Democrat also expounded on the soul-searching that has occupied his time since making his stunning, nationally televised resignation announcement three months ago with his wife and parents by his side.

"I am sorry that I have disappointed the citizens of the state of New Jersey who gave me this enormous trust," said McGreevey, whose family did not attend Monday's speech.

McGreevey is to step down Nov. 15. He resigned over a gay affair with a man identified as Golan Cipel — hired by the governor in 2002 to head the state's Homeland Security department. Cipel has steadfastly denied any involvement with

McGreevey and has alleged he was sexually harassed by the governor.

McGreevey highlighted reforms of the state's child welfare agency, environmental protections and benefits for domestic partners as some of the top achievements of his administration. But the bulk of the speech focused on McGreevey's beliefs on what he called the nation's divisive political climate and his inner thoughts about being "an American who just happens to be gay and proud."

"I don't look back with bitterness, anger or sorrow. I look forward to seeking knowledge, a journey of self-discovery," the governor told a crowd of about 400 people at a museum, at times quoting from philosophers and poets.

Republicans have criticized McGreevey for staying in office so long after announcing his intention to resign. The decision to remain in office until Nov. 15 means Senate President Richard Codey, a Democrat, will serve out the final year of McGreevey's term. Had McGreevey stepped down immediately, a special election would have been held.



New Jersey Gov. James E. McGreevey is expected to resign on Nov. 15, ending a term plagued by scandal.

Stocking adds stability to ailing hearts

Fabric has ability to shrink enlarged organ, helping it pump more efficiently

BY MARILYNN MARCHIONE

The Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — A simple fabric device that looks like fishnet hose but acts like support stockings helped weak hearts pump more efficiently and even shrink back to a more normal size, researchers reported at an American Heart Association conference.

The device is targeted at people with heart failure, which happens when a weak or damaged heart can't pump as forcefully as it should. The heart enlarges, fluid backs up into the lungs, and people get more and more short of breath and tired, often making many trips to the hospital until their hearts eventually give out.

About 5 million Americans have this condition and more than a million have the type that might be helped by the new stocking-like device.

The mesh stocking is still experimental but its maker, Acon Cardiovascular Inc. of St. Paul, Minn., already has approval to sell it in Europe and will seek the same from the federal Food and Drug Administration early next year.

Several experts said Sunday the surgically

implanted stocking could fill a gap for people who are not helped by drugs or pacemakers and who do not want or cannot have a mechanical heart pump or an organ transplant.

"We have little to offer surgically," said Dr. Timothy Gardner, a heart surgeon from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia who had no role in the study. "There's a lot of interest in this kind of simple technique."

Dr. Douglas Mann, the Baylor College of Medicine cardiologist who led a company-funded study of the device, called it "breakthrough technology."

"This does more than any existing therapy that's out there today," he said.

The company-sponsored study included 300 patients at 28 hospitals in the United States and one in Canada.

One part involved 193 people having surgery to fix a leaky heart valve, a common problem in heart failure patients. Doctors gave 102 standard surgery and the other 91, surgery plus the heart stocking.

The second part of the study involved 107 people who did not need valve surgery. Fifty were given standard treatment drugs — ACE inhibitors, beta blockers and water pills — and the other 57 got drugs plus surgery to install the stocking.

After an average of two years, 38 percent of the stocking group had improved compared with 27 percent of the others, according to a rating system including survival and other factors. About 37 percent with the stocking got worse compared to 45 percent of the others.

Only 19 stocking recipients needed a transplant, a mechanical heart pump or other major heart operation, but 33 in the other group did.

"We think this stabilizes the disease process" by relieving the pressure on the heart and giving it support so it can rest between beats, Mann said.

Researchers also measured changes in the heart's shape and size and found dramatic differences with the stocking around the organ.

"These big hearts, with this device, became small hearts," and went from a basketball shape to the more normal football shape that lets them beat as they should, Mann said.

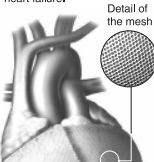
The stocking actually changes the size of the cells making up the heart, said Dr. Spencer Kubo, Acon's medical director.

The device did not help people avoid hospital stays, but doctors hope it will with longer use.

They also hope to develop a way to install it through "keyhole" surgery rather than a big cut in the chest. Company officials would not say what the device is expected to cost.

Heart stocking

Researchers have created a surgically implanted mesh stocking for the heart that acts like support hose for people with heart failure.



AP



Courtesy of NBC

Donald Trump stands with advisor Carolyn Kepcher during an episode of NBC's "The Apprentice".

"Apprentice" hits the classroom

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Business schools around the nation are including tips from "The Apprentice" in their MBA programs.

The show and its star, billionaire Donald Trump, have been used in the past to spark debate among students. But now professors are using fundamentals from the NBC hit in the lecture halls.

"Business as a discipline and an academic study area is on the rise," Denise Schoenbachler, chair of Northern Illinois University's marketing department told The New York Post in Monday editions. "And things like this that are innovative and unique get students excited."

For example, students in Schoenbachler's "Marketing Apprenticeship" class competed for scholarship money by competing in football ticket sales and raising money for troops in Iraq.

Trump himself has said he's impressed with his show's classroom appeal at schools like Babson College in Massachusetts, Southern Methodist University in Dallas, and Ohio State University in Columbus.

But there are critics.

"I think the show has a place as an illustration," said Sheila Wellington, clinical professor at New York University's Stern School of Business. "I don't think there's enough content there to build a course around."

Scientists: Human actions boost Arctic temperatures

BY JOHN HEILPRIN

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Scientists say changes in the earth's climate from human influences are occurring particularly intensely in the Arctic region, evidenced by widespread melting of glaciers, thinning sea ice and rising permafrost temperatures.

A study released Monday said the annual average amount of sea ice in the Arctic has decreased by about 8 percent in the past 30 years, resulting in the loss of 386,100 square miles of sea ice — an area bigger than Texas and Arizona combined.

"The polar regions are essentially the earth's air conditioner," Michael McCracken, president of the International Association of Meteorology and Atmospheric Sciences, told a news conference Monday. "Imagine the earth having a less efficient air conditioner."

Susan Joy Hassol, the report's lead author, said the Arctic probably would warm twice as much as the Earth. A region of extreme light and temperature changes, the Arctic's surfaces of ice, ocean water, vegetation and soil are important in reflecting the sun's heat.

Pointing to the report as a clear signal that global warming is real, Sens. John McCain, R-Ariz., and Joe Lieberman, D-Conn., said Monday the "dire consequences" of warming in the Arctic underscore the need for their proposal to require

U.S. cuts in emissions of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping greenhouse gases.

President Bush has rejected that approach.

With "some of the most rapid and severe climate change on earth," the Arctic regions' melting contributed to sea levels rising globally by an average of about three inches in the past 20 years, the report said.

"These changes in the Arctic provide an early indication of the environmental and societal significance of global warming," says the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, a four-year study by 300 scientists in eight Arctic-bordering nations, including the United States.

This most comprehensive study of Arctic warming to date adds yet more impetus to the projections by many of the world's climate scientists that there will be a steady rise in global temperature as the result of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere from the burning of fossil fuels and other sources.

It is based on ice core samples and other evidence of climate conditions such as on the ground and satellite measurements of surface air temperatures. Nations participating in the study besides the United States are Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia and Sweden.

The process is only likely to accelerate in the Arctic, a region that provides important resources such as oil, gas and fish, the study finds.

The study projects that in the next 100 years, the yearly average temperatures will increase by 7 to 13 degrees Fahrenheit over land and 13 to 18 degrees over the ocean, mainly because the water absorbs more heat.

IN THE WORLD

Arafat's wife criticizes PLO officials' visit

Bashes developing Palestinian power struggle as potential successors make way to France

BY LARA SUKHTIAN
The Associated Press

CLAMART, France — Yasser Arafat's wife on Monday accused his top lieutenants of seeking to grab control from her ailing husband, nearly toppling a visit by top Palestinian officials in the first sign of an open power struggle. Later, hospital officials restricted visitors to Arafat.

Despite the flap, Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia and former Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas left the West Bank for Jordan to get a flight to Paris to visit Arafat, consult with his doctors and meet with top French officials, including President Jacques Chirac.

But as Qureia and Abbas were on their way, a spokesman for the military hospital where Arafat is being treated said the Palestinian leader remained in stable condition in the intensive care unit, and the "medical situation...compels us to restrict visitors" to him.

After reading a brief statement, Gen. Christian Estienne did not take any questions. It remained unclear whether the restriction would keep Qureia and Abbas away from Arafat. If it does, they could ask Chirac to intervene.

Arafat remains in "stable" condition in intensive care, a hospital spokesman said Monday.

In a screaming telephone call from Arafat's hospital bedside earlier Monday, Suha Arafat told Al-Jazeera television that Arafat's aides were conspiring to usurp her husband's four-decade-long role as Palestinian leader.

"Let it be known to the honest Palestinian people that a bunch of those who want to inherit are coming to Paris," she shouted in Arabic in her first public comments since Arafat left his West Bank compound for France.

"I tell you they are trying to bury Abu Ammar alive," she continued, using Arafat's nom de guerre. "He is all right and he is going home."

In response, the top aides to Arafat briefly canceled their trip to Paris, but Palestinian Foreign Minister Nabil Shaath, who is accompanying them, later said the trip was back on and they left Ramallah for Jordan.

A senior aide to Arafat, Tayeb Abdel Rahin, originally said the three were angry with Arafat's wife and did not want to travel to Paris.

"What came from Suha doesn't represent our people," he said. "If the president were to hear that, he would reject it completely."

He said Suha Arafat "wanted to destroy the Palestinian leadership's decision and to be the lone decision-maker."



Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, center, and his wife, Suha, hold hands prior to Arafat's departure from his West Bank compound in Ramallah on Oct. 29.

Suha Arafat said she was calling from Arafat's bedside at the hospital near Paris, where the 75-year-old leader has been in intensive care since Wednesday.

A producer from Al-Jazeera told The Associated Press the station was confident it was Suha Arafat on the phone. She first called the network's Ramallah office, then its headquarters in Qatar.

Palestinians have been making contingency plans and working to avoid chaos or violence in the event of Arafat's death.

Qureia and Abbas have been working together to run Palestinian affairs in Arafat's

absence and to prevent chaos and violence if the Palestinian leader dies. Qureia has taken on some of Arafat's executive and security powers, while Abbas has been chairing meetings of the PLO's executive body.

Jamali Tarifi, the Palestinian minister of civil affairs, told Al-Jazeera the group initially was hesitant about going, but the executive committee decided the trip would help "reassure" worried Palestinians. The group was due in Paris on Monday evening and scheduled to meet with Chirac and French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier on Tuesday.

Some Palestinians have complained Suha Arafat has gained too much power. She controls the flow of information about Arafat's condition and has taken charge of access to her husband.

"It's an absurd situation when Suha is sitting there and deciding when, how and who," Sufian Abu Zaid, a Palestinian Authority official, told Israel's Army Radio.

Suha Arafat, 41, lives in Paris and has not been to the West Bank or had not seen her husband since the latest round of Palestinian violence began in 2000. She is widely believed to have control of vast funds collected by the PLO.

She has largely stayed out of Palestinian politics, although she has occasionally made comments that caused her problems. She has expressed sympathy for militant Palestinian groups, and during a 1999 meeting with then-first lady Hillary Clinton she accused Israel of using poison gas against the Palestinians.

French forces take positions near Ivory Coast president, ask for calm

BY PAREFAIT KOUASSI
The Associated Press

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast — French armored vehicles took up positions near the home of Ivory Coast's president Monday, and thousands of his supporters marched on the site, fearing an attempt to oust him as France clamped down on violence in its former West African colony.

The commanders of Ivory Coast and French forces appeared jointly on state television to appeal for calm. Earlier, French troops fired warning shots to ward off the surging, chanting throngs filling the streets around the home of President Laurent Gbagbo.

A weekend of unrest by machine-gun mobs confronting French troops has left more than 500 people wounded, a Red Cross official said. Two Abidjan hospitals told The Associated Press they handled a total of five dead and 250 wounded in Monday's violence alone, with at least three killed by gunshots.

Fifty armored vehicles moved

in around Gbagbo's home in Ivory Coast's commercial capital, Abidjan, presidential spokesman Desire Tagro said. "Their presence here is scaring people. They're crying and they think that President Gbagbo is going to be overthrown."

The French denied surrounding the house or intending to oust Gbagbo, saying forces only were securing a temporary base at a hotel a couple hundred yards away for foreign evacuations.

Gen. Matthias Doue, Ivorian chief of army staff, urged rioters to go home, adding, "I call on people to remain calm."

Despite the appeal, the protest swelled by several thousand people by late afternoon.

A standoff arose outside Abidjan as well, as several hundred loyalist youths stood on a main road, blocking a 70-vehicle, heavily armed convoy of French reinforcements trying to enter the city.

Tensions also crossed Ivory Coast's borders, with U.N. officials telling AP that more than 1,000 refugees have fled into neighboring Liberia.

Jordanians militants acquitted of planned strike

AMMAN, Jordan — Jordan's military court on Monday acquitted four alleged Muslim militants of conspiracy to attack U.S. forces in the kingdom, saying a government declaration last year that no foreign troops were stationed in Jordan nullified the charges against them.

The court, however, sentenced the four — including a policeman and a former Finance Ministry official — to one year in jail for illegal possession of an automatic weapon. The guilty verdict can be appealed.

From The Associated Press



Muslims gather to talk after the Friday service at the Al-Tabi Mosque in Amsterdam, Netherlands. The murder of Dutch filmmaker Theo Van Gogh on Tuesday has brought to the forefront the uneasy relations between Muslims and non-Muslims in Europe.

European Muslims ask for protection

The Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — Muslim groups asked the Dutch government Monday to protect Islamic sites after an elementary school was bombed — the latest in escalating tensions following the killing of a filmmaker, allegedly by an Islamic radical.

The powerful, pre-dawn explosion in Eindhoven, about 75 miles south of Amsterdam, caused no injuries but blew out the school's front doors and scattered glass and debris across the usually

quiet neighborhood.

City officials announced round-the-clock police protection for Islamic buildings, fearing further reprisals for the killing last Tuesday of Theo van Gogh. Six alleged Islamic radicals are in custody in connection with his death.

Eindhoven, an industrial city of 200,000 people, has five mosques. Ayhan Tonca, chairman of the Contact Group for Muslims and Government, said the Muslim community fears further attacks.

"We had seen a number of inci-

dents of arson already but this was a full-scale bombing," Tonca said. "We can only be grateful that it was in the middle of the night and not when the children were at school."

Despite calls for restraint by government leaders for calm, Van Gogh's murder has unleashed a wave of violence aimed at the Muslim community.

"Eindhoven is shocked, very shocked, by a cowardly deed in the middle of the night when normal citizens are sleeping," Eindhoven Mayor Alexander Sakkers said.

OPINION

No chads? Election '04 sure left us hanging

BY PETER CARLSON

The Washington Post

What's it over? Already? That's no fun. What about the recounts? What about the lawsuits? Where are the dueling protesters, the dueling pundits, the dueling courts issuing dueling rulings? After 18 months of fevered campaigning, it's all over in one lousy day — well, maybe a lousy day and a half. It's so retro, so 20th century. Come on, candidates, this is a new millennium and voters were spoiled by the election of 2000, when the excitement — or whatever you call it — continued for 36 fun-filled days.

Ah, those were the days — and days, those were the days.

Absolutely nothing is happening. But back in 2000, the fun was just getting up around noon. You remember it: Al Gore had conceded defeat, then announced, telling George Bush, "Don't get snippy!" A mob of angry old people — many hobbling on canes or sitting in wheelchairs — clogged the streets of downtown West Palm Beach to protest the infamous "butterfly ballot," which was so confusing it caused nearly 10,000 Jews to vote for Pat Buchanan by accident.

Ah, the butterfly ballot! It brings back memories, doesn't it? Remember how Florida was invaded by SWAT teams of pit-bull lawyers, each led by a former secretary of state — Jim Baker for the Republicans, Warren Christopher for the Democrats? Dueling secretaries of state — now that's entertainment! Remember the wonderful scenes of election officials holding ballots up to the light, going cross-eyed as they looked for chads in all their infinite varieties: hanging chads, swinging chads, bent chads and pregnant chads?

Remember the big banana-yellow Ryder truck that carried Palm Beach County's ballots 450 miles to a court in Tallahassee, accompanied by a police escort and news helicopters that showed its progress live to cable news networks nationwide? Driver Tony Enos stopped at a rest area near Disney World and was besieged by TV reporters who asked him drinking orange juice and saying, "The ballots seem to be riding fine back there."

It was, without a doubt, the most exciting vehicle-on-highway story since O.J.'s white Bronco.

Speaking of entertainment, remember all those great editorial cartoons and those Internet jokes

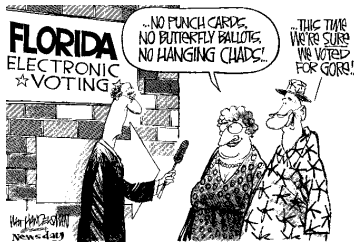
showing ballots where every line ended up pointing to "George W. Bush"? ...

Remember Katherine Harris, who served simultaneously as Florida's top election official and co-chairman of the Bush campaign in the state? Remember all the jokes about her makeup? She caused Democrats to froth at the mouth and babble uncontrollably, with former Clinton aide Paul Begala calling her a "dilettante debutante Republican hack" and lawyer Alan Dershowitz calling her "a crook and an operative."

Then there was the Miami-Dade election board, which voted not to conduct a recount, then voted to conduct a recount, then voted to stop the recount in the middle? Hollywood's best writers couldn't make that stuff up.

And the angry mob that pounded on the walls outside the room where the Miami-Dade election officials were conducting their recount, screaming "Stop the count. Stop the fraud!" They looked like garden-variety thugs, but they turned out to be hotshot Republican staffers.

"This is more exciting than any sporting event," a spectator at a 12-hour-long meeting of the Palm



Beach election board told The Washington Post. "This is better than a subway Series."

He was right, of course. Boy, those days were fun! But this year ... pffft! This post-election is a total bust. ...

The guy who came in second simply quits, explaining that because he got fewer votes he lost. Sure, that may be technically true, but where's the fun in that? When you think about what could have been, you weep. Ten days of Bush-eye bureaucrats counting more

than 100,000 Ohio provisional ballots, as the world watches. Lawyers swarming into the state, suing and countering. Protesters screaming at one another in the streets.

Pundits screaming at one another on TV. ... But, alas, it's not to be. ... And now political junkies are going through cold turkey, waiting for the 2008 campaign to begin, which probably won't happen for it, at least two weeks. Damn, it's, just not right.

Peter Carlson is a Post reporter.

'Last Letters Home' painful (but important) to see

BY ERIC MIK

St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Bullets and bombs favor no candidate, no political party. Land mines, tank shells, mortars and rocket-propelled grenades do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, nationality, ethnic origin or sexual status. Order men and women to war, and some will die.

Through Oct. 31, 1123 U.S. military personnel have died in Iraq. By Jan. 20, the number will be higher, when George W. Bush stands on the steps of the U.S. Capitol swearing to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution as president and commander in chief. More will die before his next four-year term expires.

When an American servicemember dies in Iraq, the nation is informed, a community takes note and pays respect, and a circle of family and friends grieves. For those outside the circle, it is possible to mark the fatality as a tick of a running tally, an inevitable albeit regrettable consequence of armed conflict. Inside the circle, though, nothing is abstract. Notification — the knock on the door — hits people like a fist to the chest. Bereaved survivors ache with loss as if suffused with infection and fever. Consciousness short-circuits. Perceptions shift.

Assumptions vaporize. What does such anguish look like, sound like, feel like? Ten families who have lost sons and daughters in Iraq allowed writer-director Bill Couturie within their private circles so he could honor their loved ones by telling just a sliver of their stories.

Couturie's one-hour film, "Last Letters Home: Voices of American Troops from the Battlefields of Iraq," premieres on Veterans Day on HBO in the States. HBO is allowing cable systems to unscramble the program for all customers, not just HBO subscribers. "Last Letters Home" is deliciously fashioned around readings by family members of letters they received from Iraq, is quiet, honest and heartbreaking. Notwithstanding the

ubiquitous Internet, many of the letters were handwritten — transformed by death into artifacts bearing the precious personal marks of their writers. Most teemed with chatty banter about service life, sweet messages for those back home and requests for care packages. A few conveyed ominous premonitions.

Some arrived like ghosts — after the family had learned of the soldier's fate.

The documentary (Life Books has issued a companion hardback volume) took shape after The New York Times began publishing excerpts of letters sent home by troops who died in Iraq. But the film — which blends relatives' on-camera readings and recollections and unspoken sadness with still photos and composer Todd Boeckelheide's poignant score — is far more powerful.

Through each of the 10 segments, a distinctive individual comes into focus. Pfc. Raheem Heigher pays tribute to his mom. Spc. Michelle Wisker bubbles about her promotion and asks her mom and dad to pray for her. Sgt. Frank Carroll cautions his young nephews to "watch out for cars" when

they're riding their bikes; his sister says he turned back into a kid when he played with the boys. Spc. Robert Allen Wise offers a wry reference to "The Wizard of Oz," saying he clicked his heels three times but still didn't get home.

The film closes with the story of Pfc. Jesse A. Givens, who sensed he would not return and wrote a letter to be sent only if he died. The letter asks his wife, Melissa, to "please find it in your heart to forgive me for leaving you alone." He urges his unborn son, Carson, to "please be proud of me, and please don't stop loving life." Melissa calls the letter "the hardest and the best thing I ever read." She received it four weeks after learning Jesse had died — when she arrived home from the hospital after giving birth to Carson.

"Last Letters Home" is scrupulously free of overt politics. If these mothers, fathers, sisters, wives and girlfriends expressed any anger at their government when Couturie filmed them, he left it out.

What they convey instead is palpable sorrow for the beloved souls taken from them

and for the loss of the now-impossible dreams they shared.

That doesn't mean, though, that the film lacks political implications. Given, for example, drowned when a bank of the Euphrates River gave way and his M-1 tank sank beneath its waters. It was May 1, 2003 — the day President Bush stood on an aircraft carrier off the coast of San Diego and declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended.

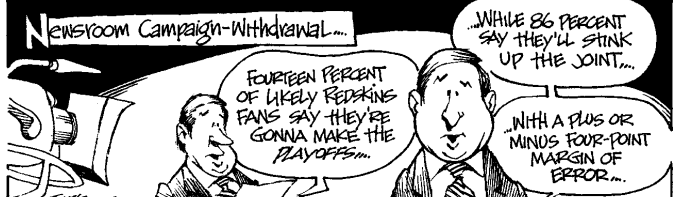
The essential truth of "Last Letters Home" is that the war in Iraq, like all wars, has a cost. It is a cost not calculated in budgets and material, in alliances made or broken, in sovereignty transferred, police forces trained or infrastructure reconstructed. It is measured, rather, in the deaths of human beings one by one, in the fracturing of families, in the unknowable loss of whatever these individuals might have done with the lives taken from them.

The solemn responsibility of the president, whoever he is, is to decide whether these costs are worth it.

Eric Mik is commentary editor for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



Cartoon by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World Wide Web

'Flowering landscapes' fade

15 years after East Germany opened Berlin Wall, promises of prosperity give way to stagnation

By TONY CZUCZKA
The Associated Press

GOERLITZ, Germany — Fifteen years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the lovingly restored houses, squares and churches in this medieval town look like monuments to success in Germany's massive effort to revive its once-communist east.

But at night a different picture emerges in the dark windows and empty streets: Half the apartments in the city center stand empty behind their elegant baroque and art deco facades.

Cultural treasures boost pride but can't cover up the town's dramatic loss of people and jobs. High unemployment remains the worst symptom of an unresolved economic mess that continues to drain the life out of what used to be East Germany.

It's more than enough to dampen any festive mood Tuesday, the anniversary of East Germany's Nov. 9, 1989, decision to open the Berlin Wall in the face of huge pro-democracy demonstrations. East and West Germany merged 11 months later, ending their 40-year Cold War divide.

The East's stagnation, a legacy of a failed investment spree and high taxes and regulation imported from West Germany, has made a mockery of former Chancellor Helmut Kohl's 1990 promise of "flowering landscapes" in an east freed of communist rule.

Reunification began with euphoria, and the wealthy west began pumping what would eventually amount to \$1.5 trillion into the east, expecting that the poorer cousins would soon catch up. The money built new highways, train stations, telephone networks and shopping malls, and rescued historical treasures such as Goerlitz's downtown, which had crumbled under communism.

But new buildings don't equal jobs: Every fifth easterner remains out of work, roughly twice the national average.

Add growing pressure on jobs also in the west,

where unemployment is over 9 percent, and easterners can expect even less sympathy from their richer brethren this year.

"The relationship is still tense and difficult, and it doesn't appear to be getting easier," Mayor Rolf Karbaum said in his office at Goerlitz's 16th-century town hall.

The troubles faced by Goerlitz, 120 miles southeast of Berlin, are mirrored across much of the east. The city's outmoded smokestack industries collapsed in the breakneck rush to capitalism, wiping out 10,000 jobs in a population of 72,000.

That population shrank by nearly a quarter as the educated, young and talented headed west to find work, leaving behind the elderly and unskilled. Unemployment has hovered around 25 percent for years.

"The young people don't come back once they have some job training in the west," Karbaum said. "They stay where they have their new environment, their newly founded families."

Overall, the east has lost more than 800,000 of its 17 million people. Business groups in Saxony state, where Goerlitz is located, launched a job-offer Web site wistfully called www.sachsekommurueck.de — "Saxon, come back."

Meanwhile, the next front in the competition for jobs has opened, just across the Neisse river in the town of Zgorzelec in Poland, one of the former Soviet bloc nations that joined the European Union on May 1.

Germaners trek to Zgorzelec for cheaper haircuts, food and gasoline. Already, the region's prized blue polka-dot pottery is made in low-wage Poland.

Karbaum fears the German side won't be able to keep up.

"If an investor comes sniffing around Goerlitz, he'll also be ready to make that little hop across the river," Karbaum worried.

"Over there, you have a whole other set of conditions — dream conditions."



A 16th-century building and the tall spires of the Gothic St. Petrus church mask the economic stagnation faced by Goerlitz in what was once East Germany. After the Berlin Wall was opened and eventually torn down, the more prosperous west poured nearly \$1.5 trillion into the east, restoring historic treasures and building train stations, highways and shopping malls, but the money failed to translate into jobs.

EU files beef complaint against U.S.

The Associated Press

BRUSSELS, Belgium — The European Union's head office said Monday it had filed a complaint against the United States and Canada for failing to lift sanctions against the EU over its ban on imports of hormone-treated beef.

"There is no reason why European companies should continue to be targeted by sanctions when they export to Canada and the United States," EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy said. Lamy said the EU's contentious ban "on certain growth-promoting hormones is now in full respect" of world trade rules. The EU complaint was filed at the World Trade Organization.

EU spokeswoman Arancha Gonzalez said officials had been in contact with both governments to "invite them to lift their sanctions" after the 25-nation bloc passed new legislation limiting the ban on hormones.

The United States and Canada said last year they would maintain their trade sanctions against the EU over its hormone ban, rejecting claims by Brussels that it now has solid scientific proof that the meat poses a risk to human health.

U.N. official: Kosovo to have more power

Province gains three ministries

By GARETIN KRAJA
The Associated Press

PRISTINA, Serbia-Montenegro — Kosovo's top U.N. official decided Monday to hand over more power to the province's government by creating three new ministries, the United Nations said.

The new ministries will deal with energy, local governance and the return of Serbs and other minorities that have fled the province, a U.N. statement said.

Soren Jessen-Petersen, who heads the U.N. administration in

Kosovo, also decided to create the post of deputy prime minister and other deputy ministers, the statement said.

The U.N. said the decisions were part of the process of transferring power to Kosovo's fledgling institutions. It didn't say when the new ministries would be opened.

Currently, the Kosovo government has 10 ministries.

The province also has a presi-

dent and an elected assembly with limited power. The ultimate authority in decision-making, particularly in matters of security and justice, rests with the U.N. mission which navigates the disputed province toward a settlement.

The United Nations has been administering Kosovo since June 1999, following NATO's air war that halted a Serb crackdown on independence-seeking ethnic Al-

banians. That war left an estimated 10,000 ethnic Albanians dead.

Since then tens of thousands of Serbs and other minorities fled Kosovo following attacks by ethnic Albanian extremists bent on revenge.

Jessen-Petersen's decision came a few weeks after general elections in Kosovo. President Ibrahim Rugova's party won the elections, but fell short of winning an absolute majority to govern alone.

The main political parties are negotiating ways to form a new government.

Italian officials worried about Naples' rising violence

The Associated Press

ROME — A series of killings and gang shootouts in Naples have Italian officials worried that the southern city is turning into the "Wild West" of Italy, with many calling for tougher measures to curb the violence.

On Saturday night, unidentified gunmen opened fire on a group of youths in a poor neighborhood on the outskirts of the city, killing a 25-year-old and injuring five others. In the same area earlier in the week, at least two other people were killed and four injured.

Authorities say the killings are part of a mob turf war. Naples Mayor Rosa Russo Jervolino said Sunday that the attacks show that "strengthening intelligence services on the territory is necessary to understand what's going on," according to the ANSA news agency.

The president of the Campania region, which includes Naples, called on the government to step up security measures.

"We must react, all of us," Regional President Antonio Bassolino told Corriere della Sera in remarks published Sunday. But he added, "Guaranteeing public order is the duty of the central state."

Criminality has traditionally been a problem in Naples, where unemployment runs as high as 24 percent, according to some estimates. The nationwide average is about 9 percent. The city and nearby villages are home to the Camorra crime syndicate, which runs extortion rackets, illegal gambling and drug networks.

But the recent violence is unusual even by Naples' standards.

Besides Saturday's attack, two suspected

mobsters were killed and four paramilitary Carabinieri policemen were injured last week.

Shootouts last month left a 17-year-old dead and two people injured, La Stampa newspaper said.

Italian newspapers have dubbed Naples the "Wild West" of Italy, and Interior Minister Giuseppe Pisani called on city residents to help authorities pin down the criminals.

The Interior Minister rejected accusations that it is not doing enough to guarantee public order, saying Sunday that it has deployed all 13,000 police forces in the area — making it one of the most heavily policed places in the country.

The ministry, which is in charge of public security forces, said that in the first 10 months of 2004 police arrested 67 "dangerous fugitives" and searched tens of thousands of people.

First transvestite pageant crowns a queen

BY ALISA TANG

The Associated Press

PATTAYA, Thailand — Re-shaping their bodies with tape — and in some cases, surgery — the Miss International Queen contestants looked more feminine than many women could ever dream of, even though they were all born boys.

The 24 crossdressers and medically altered transsexuals caked on makeup, sprayed their hair into hurricane-proof bouffants, and donned glamorous gowns and skimpy bikinis for the international beauty pageant.

Transgenderism is common and widely accepted in mostly Buddhist Thailand, particularly in Bangkok and towns such as Pattaya. A two-hour drive south of Bangkok, this beach resort is known for its anything-goes sexuality, prostitution and transvestite cabaret theaters like Tiffany's, where the first Miss International Queen pageant carried on into the wee hours of Sunday morning.

The contestants, from 11 Asian countries, Germany and France, primed backstage as they answered questions about the escapes from their male bodies.

Jesse Rogers, a 29-year-old fashion design student from Singapore, realized she was attracted to men when she was in the time — was in the army.

"I found that I liked men and that I wanted to be a woman," she said. "I suspected it before, but I didn't know for sure until then."

Arisha Rani, a 29-year-old Indi-



AP photos

Treachada Petcharat, right, of Thailand and Fujiko Sakaki, center, and Miki Yoshikawa, left, both from Japan, wait backstage Saturday during the Miss International Queen 2004 competition, a transvestite beauty pageant in Pattaya, Thailand. The first international transvestite competition drew entrants mostly from Asia however there were entries from Europe. The main contest rule was contestants had to be born male.

an beauty with curves Jennifer Lopez might envy, said "from childhood, I was always wearing my younger sister's clothes."

Dressed in her evening gown, the only visible scar on Rani — who has had all the necessary surgery to physically become a woman — is a two-inch line across her throat, where doctors filed down her once prominent

Adam's apple. Even her Singaporean passport now identifies her as a woman.

Some contestants boasted lean, lithe arms and legs, dainty hands and plunging cleavage. The only giveaways were the ungainly feet, pronounced cheekbones and deep, throaty coughs and voices.

Waving painted nails in front of nervous faces and batting big eye-

lash extensions, they composed themselves to gracefully glide in high heels into the spotlight of the event, broadcast live in Thailand.

Some, such as Sylvie Lynn, 40, from Paris, are part-time women.

Lynn spends half her time as a male ski instructor, and the crisp outlines of her arm and back muscles reveal her Y chromosome.

She found out about the contest



Treachada Petcharat, right, reacts to winning the crown as fellow competitor Arisha Rani of India enters the runner-up spot.

on the Internet and decided, "Why not?" She didn't win any awards and just checked it up for to experience, while Rani was crushed to win first runner-up for the second time in as many similarly-themed pageants.

Guests at the event stared at almost every woman who attended the pageant, and one could see the question in their eyes: A "real" woman, or not? The Miss International Queen title and \$7,000 prize went to college student Treachada Petcharat, who flat-out passed the test — no one could guess she was once a boy.

"I don't think that I'm more woman than the women here," said a breathless Treachada, crowned with a gemmed tiara, beaming a perfect smile for flashing cameras. "But I definitely feel like a real woman."

Kuwaiti sex-change woman fights Muslim conservatism

BY DIANA ELIAS

The Associated Press

KUWAIT CITY — Her father and brothers beat her. The government suspended her from her job. A group of Muslim fundamentalists screamed abuse at her outside a courtroom.

Her crime: She was born a boy named Ahmed, and now is a 29-year-old blonde who calls herself Amal — Hope.

An overseas sex-change operation has done little to help Amal's struggle for official recognition as a woman in conservative Kuwait. One court ruled for her, another overturned it and now she is going to the Court of Cassation, her last avenue of appeal.

"People see me as a comic case," said Amal. "I wish they could look at me as a human being, someone who was born with a disease."

Many Middle East countries refuse to recognize sex changes. Jordan, Lebanon and Syria do, but it takes complicated and lengthy court proceedings. Only Iran and Egypt allow people to officially change their gender with relative ease.

Amal says she has always felt and acted like a female. When she was little, she said, she loved to wear her mother's dresses and shoes. Her family humored her in



AP

Two fully covered Kuwaiti women walk by inside a shopping mall in Kuwait City, Kuwait. An appeals court has rejected a Kuwaiti man's application to be officially considered a woman after a sex-change operation, court sources announced.

her childhood and even called her by a girl's name: Athari.

On the first day of kindergarten, she said, the teacher called her Ahmed and she didn't respond.

"My name is Athari," I told her," she said.

As she grew up, however, her family realized it wasn't just a phase. Classmates noticed, and a neighbor sent his mother to ask for her hand in marriage.

Her father and two brothers, one of them her twin, beat her, locked her in the bathroom, and forced her to spend many nights in the yard without dinner.

"I couldn't be a man by force. It was out of my hands," she said.

Amal's father refused to speak with The Associated Press. His lawyer, Abdul-Hadi, said it was "logically and religiously unacceptable for Ahmed to enter

women's toilets and beauty shops," even after the operation. "I pity the young man now."

For an interview, Amal wore a red skirt and a matching tight-fitting blouse, and was fasting from dawn to dusk in observance of Ramadan, the Muslim holy month. She refused to be identified by her surname or to be photographed, saying her life was in danger.

She said she has attempted suicide three times. At 14, she swallowed all the pills in her family's medicine cabinet. Another time she ended up in intensive care and her family didn't visit her, she said.

At 17, she was kicked out of the house. On her own, now calling herself Amal, she found a secretarial job at the Ministry of Education.

She wore jeans and hid her long hair under a baseball cap, but co-workers would open her office door "just to take a peek at me without saying anything," she said. She couldn't go to the toilet because she didn't know whether to use the men's or women's room.

Amal made extra money by designing women's and children's clothes and selling paintings and home decorations. In 2001, at 26, she had enough saved for an operation in Thailand.

Last year, the Ministry of Education suspended Amal from her job until she works out her legal status.

Kuwaiti women work, and unlike those in neighboring Saudi Arabia, they drive cars and can travel abroad without a male relative's permission.

The mixing of the sexes is largely frowned upon, however.

Coeeducation stops at kindergarten, and the idea of a sex-change operation is too much for many. In the newspaper Al-Rai Al-Amm, columnist Ali al-Fadhel wrote that just thinking about sex changes embarrasses him.

But Amal is pressing her fight. In April, a court upheld her right to register as female because the sex-change operation was a health matter that merited an exception to Sharia, or Islamic law.

Last month, an appeals court overturned the ruling, saying God decides gender and humans have no right to change it. The last time she went to court, she wore a veil and black cloak. Outside the courtroom, fundamentalists tried to attack her, one of them screaming, "We will not let you be, you infidel," according to her lawyer, Adel al-Yehya.

"I feel I am sitting in a cardboard box with one hole bringing me light," Amal said. "Either I get out of the box, or they close this hole."

Coke confiscations

FL KEY WEST — More than 37 tons of cocaine, with an estimated street value of \$2.3 billion, were confiscated during five seizures at sea this fall, the Coast Guard said.

The cocaine, seized between Aug. 21 and Sept. 26, was being hauled off a Navy frigate Friday.

The largest cocaine discovery in the history of Coast Guard's East Coast operations was made Sept. 17, when a detachment from the frigate the USS Curtis found 15 tons of the drug on a fishing vessel about 300 miles west of the Galapagos Islands.

Thirty-one people arrested face prosecution in federal court in Tampa.

Governor pays up

RI PROVIDENCE — Former Gov. Bruce Sundlun has obeyed a court order and paid \$33,114 owed to one of his ex-wives.

Sundlun was found in contempt of court on Oct. 18 for failing to make the payment to Joyanne Sundlun, who lives in Washington. He was given a day to send the money, which cover health insurance, nursing home insurance, medical copayments and dental expenses between June 2001 and July 2004. Sundlun was governor from 1991 to 1995. He was married to Joyanne Sundlun from 1974 to 1985. The 84-year-old Sundlun has been married to his fifth wife, Susan Dittelman, since 2000. Joyanne Sundlun told The Providence Journal the court tussle was "more of the same."

Dam effective

TN KNOXVILLE — The Tennessee Valley Authority calculated Friday that its efforts to control flooding this year along the Tennessee River system spared residents and businesses about \$12 million in damage.

"These are not particularly high numbers," said Morgan Goranoff, TVA's manager of river scheduling.

He noted that TVA averages \$187 million a year in averted flooding costs. However, the potential losses this year would have been fairly concentrated.

School at fault?

MT HELENA — The parents of two 11-year-old boys whose frozen bodies were found in a snowy field after they skipped class and guzzled vodka have sued the school district for \$4 million.

The wrongful death lawsuit claims the Roman School District failed to protect Justin Benoist and Frankie Nicola III and did not hire enough American Indian staff members, who would be "sympathetic to the problem of alcoholism and alcohol abuse prevention."

Justin and Frankie went missing Feb. 27 after they skipped afternoon classes. A friend found their bodies three days later.

Frankie, whose blood alcohol level was 0.50 percent, died of alcohol poisoning, while Justin died of a combination of alcohol poisoning and hypothermia. The boys were

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

members of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.

Justin's 14-year-old brother, Tyler, was found dead of smoke inhalation in a burned trailer last November. Authorities said he passed out from drinking and had a blood alcohol level more than twice the legal limit for driving.

Initiative confuses many

AZ PHOENIX — Immigrant parents have been flooding Hispanic community leaders with calls, wondering if an Arizona ballot issue approved by voters last week means they should keep their children in school or avoid going out, Latino leaders said.

Proposition 200 requires proof of citizenship when seeking public benefits or when registering to vote. Government employees are required to report suspected undocumented immigrants seeking public benefits.

Phoenix-area Head Start leaders said attendance dropped dramatically Wednesday as worried parents kept their children home from the federally funded preschool program. In one classroom, only two children showed up instead of the usual 20.

Pension dispute

MA LANCASTER — Supporters of a widow whose fire-



Closing down shop

Barber Don Brehmer outfits a mounted deer head with a chair cloth before closing up shop at Graver Barbers in downtown Fargo, N.D. Brehmer and his son, Joel, close their shop early to hunt white tail deer near Cooperstown, N.D.

fighter husband was killed on duty last November vowed not to give up efforts to gain a lifetime pension for the woman after voters rejected a referendum to pay for the family's death benefits.

A town referendum on whether to give Claire McNamara a \$650,000 pension and health benefits fell short by 18 votes in Tuesday's election. There was still a chance that the proposal could still pass, because of 35 provisional ballots that remained to be counted.

"Our son lost his life serving a community, and a large number of people in our community voted not to give benefits to his wife and children," said Martin McNamara, the father of fallen firefighter Martin McNamara. "I'm disappointed."

Because the proposed Lancaster benefit would have required a one-year 7 percent property tax hike, residents had to approve the increase, as voters statewide must do anytime a town wants to raise property taxes more than 2.5 percent. Lancaster, in the central part of the state, has a population of about 7,000.

Gator stabbing

FL SARASOTA — A fisherman was cited for killing an alligator nicknamed Elvis who lived in a golf course community's pond. The man said he stabbed the reptile in self-defense.

Rick Allen Burns, 49, faces up to 60 days in jail and a fine if convicted on a misdemeanor charge of possession of an alligator without a permit.

Five-foot-long Elvis was found dying in October with a hunting knife in its head. A \$1,000 reward for information was posted and an anonymous tip led to Burns, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission said Friday.

N.J. tries to honor dirt

NJ TRENTON — It may be the Garden State, but what about the garden soil? The Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee unanimously approved a bill to designate Downer Soil — a grayish-brown loamy sand found mostly in the southern half of New Jersey — as the official state soil.

The measure now goes to the full Assembly, and if it's eventually signed into law, Downer Soil will enjoy lofty status like the square dance, the honeybee and the brook trout.

Vandals wreck GOP HQ

NC RALEIGH — An apparent mob of vandals attacked the North Carolina Republican Party headquarters, causing minor smoke damage, breaking windows and leaving vulgar messages, police said.

Three people were arrested. In addition to the damage, the vandals left a burned effigy depicting President Bush and Sen. John Kerry, police said.

The officers found several spent fireworks, poster boards with slogans and spray-painted expletives on the walls. At least two windows were broken and police said it appeared that the vandals tried to put incendiary devices inside the building.



A different kind of beauty Doug Maze competes for the fictitious Miss Glamorous title, during his portrayal of Ruth Ann Ruth, the platinum blonde, hotter-than-hot Miss Bible Belt in the musical comedy "Pageant," in Decatur, Ind.



Waiting to break out Three dogs look out from a mobile home window in "Sammyville," a tiny enclave of trailers, outbuildings, and other small dwellings located in the Blue Mountains of Eastern Oregon outside the town of Elgin.



Doin' it cowboy style Modern-day cowboy Tom Ward does a Texas skip while showing rope tricks to Monroe Elementary School students on the school playground in Enid, Okla.



Leaf jumpers Ben Herman, 14, left, Harry Swan, 14, center, and Rippy Swan, 12, leap off the top of Quick Pick, Maine's municipal leaf pile.



Abnormal sighting A visitor to the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame Museum in New Castle, Ind., takes a photo of a giant basketball shoe outside the museum.



Hang on! Lidia Hernandez, 15, gets temporarily stuck in the crook of a tree as she attempts to hook a segment of snake light around a branch. The light string later was wound around the base of the tree by fellow volunteers at the Racine, Wis., zoo.



Tree bucking Chuck Rhoads of Haggard Hauling and Rigging looked like he was riding a bucking bronco as he and workers with Ram Trucking and Kessinger-Hunter prepared to lift the Mayor's Christmas Tree from its trailer at Crown Center Square in Kansas City, Mo.

Anthony gets her day

NY ALBANY — New York state has declared an annual day of commemoration for Susan B. Anthony, the women's rights pioneer who fought for the right to vote.

Susan B. Anthony Day will be Feb. 15 each year. The bill was signed into law with other measures announced Friday.

Anthony's efforts led to the 19th Amendment in 1920, which granted women the right to vote 100 years after Anthony was born.

Lotto line causes loss

TN City Commissioner Charles Moton of Clarksville, Miss., says he threw away a \$213 million-winning Powerball ticket earlier this year after the Tennessee lottery's telephone voice recording gave him the wrong winning numbers.

Now he wants something to show for it.

In a lawsuit filed against the Tennessee Education Lottery Corporation, Moton claims he called the lottery's toll-free number, listened to the winning numbers and then "failed to secure" the tickets, thinking he had won.

Moton says he bought more tickets several days later, including manually selecting a replay of the May 8 Quick Pick ticket. He says he checked the recording later that night and learned the ticket was a jackpot winner — for the previous drawing.

Smoking crackdown

VT WINOOSKI — The City Council is considering extending the new ban on smoking in bars to private clubs.

City voters approved by almost two to one a smoking ban that was approved by city officials earlier this year.

Letters will go out to city bars this week, notifying them the ban took effect immediately, said city attorney William O'Brien.

The ban on smoking in taverns does not include private clubs such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars or the Loyal Order of Moose.

That could change, as City Councilors are considering extending the ban to the private clubs.

Explosives conviction

IL ROCKFORD — A man who amassed explosives and made a list of public figures who were "marked to die" because of their liberal and antigay stances was convicted in federal court.

A federal jury found 20-year-old Michael Breit guilty of illegally receiving explosives and illegally receiving explosive materials with intent to kill, injure, intimidate people or damage property.

Breit was charged in April after he accidentally fired an AK-47 assault rifle in his apartment in Rockford, about 80 miles northwest of Chicago.

Police searching his apartment found weapons and incriminating notes, including a list of public figures with the word "marked" next to their names. Breit had told investigators "marked" meant "marked to die" for liberal or antigay views.

Texts define marriage

TX AUSTIN — The Texas Board of Education ap-

proved new health textbooks after the publishers gave in to last-minute pressure from some board members to define marriage as a "lifelong union" between a man and woman.

The decision, which involves two of the biggest textbook publishers, is an example of Texas exerting its clout as the nation's second-largest buyer of textbooks. Officials say the decision could affect hundreds of thousands of books in Texas alone.

Board member Terri Leo, a Republican, said she was pleased with the publishers' changes. She led the effort to get the publishers to change the texts, objecting to what she called "asexual stealth phrases" such as "individuals who marry."

Leo charged that the proposed new books for the state's middle schools and high schools would run counter to a Texas law banning the recognition of gay civil unions because the texts used terms like "married partners" instead of "husband and wife."

Doctor gives old flu shots

WA BELLINGHAM — The state's top medical quality board has accused a physician of giving outdated flu vaccine to 55 patients.

Dr. Gary McCallum used a batch of last year's vaccine, according to the state's Medical Quality Assurance Commission, which licenses physicians and other medical professionals. The board charged him with unprofessional conduct, specifically fraud and misrepresentation.

McCallum told patients the vaccine, purchased last year in Canada, was good for the current flu season even though its expiration date was in July, state Health Department spokesman Tim Church said.

Girl caught with crack

FL ORLANDO — A 6-year-old girl brought more than \$1,000 worth of crack to school, and her mother claimed the child must have gotten it while trick-or-treating.

The first-grader was suspended from Tangle Park Elementary. Her mother is under investigation.

School officials sent a letter home to parents, explaining how an anti-drug campaign led another student to recognize the more than a dozen pieces of crack.

Charges in school crash

MA WOBURN — A 65-year-old man has been charged with a misdemeanor after his car hopped the curb outside an elementary school last month, pinning children and adults against a concrete wall and injuring 12 people, authorities said.

Enrico V. Caruso pleaded innocent to negligent operation of a motor vehicle. The charge carries a maximum penalty of two years in jail and a \$200 fine.

Caruso told police that his car sped up for no reason, and he was unable to stop it, according to the documents. But Caruso's grandson, Christian Caruso, said his grandfather's prosthetic leg got stuck on the accelerator as he reached for his cane.

Stories and photos from wire services

FACES

Eminem rocked the vote

Rapper Eminem made his voice heard for the first time at the ballot box.

The 32-year-old voted by absentee ballot in last week's presidential election and had a bodyguard drop it off in Clinton Township, Mich., clerk Dennis Tomlinson said.

"This guy (the bodyguard) was huge. I'd hate to run into him in a dark alley late at night," Tomlinson told The Macomb Daily of Mount Clemens.

No word on who Eminem voted for. In a recent interview with Rolling Stone, he said it would be his first time voting. He was highly critical of President Bush but had not yet settled on Democratic Sen. John Kerry.

The rapper had been enlisted by hip-hop mogul Russell Simmons to help encourage thousands of young fans to vote. His music even made it into the campaign: Democratic contender Dick Gephardt played "Lose Yourself" on the trail.

Timeless display at awards show

This year's American Music Awards will feature stars such as Usher, Alicia Keys, Gwen Stefani and Rod Stewart, but the most talked-about moment might come from the Beatles.

The show plans to air a 2½-minute tape from 1964 that was recently discovered.

"We've got a wonderful old ... tape that's been lost for 40 years that nobody's seen since it first aired featuring the Beatles singing 'She Loves You' and 'I Wanna Hold Your Hand,'" producer Dick Clark said last week. "It was an English show that aired here that for some reason or another went into a trunk somewhere."

Stefani is set to open the Nov. 14 show, which will air live on ABC from Los Angeles. Janet Jackson will introduce Keys and Usher.

Spacey makes a 'Splash' with voice

Kevin Spacey has been channeling an old hero — Bobby Darin.

For his new film about Darin's life, "Beyond the Sea," Spacey has the own singing of Darin's greatest hits, including "Mack the Knife" and "Splish Splash."

"People that knew and worked with Bobby Darin didn't know the difference when they heard him sing," said co-star Kate Bosworth.

Spacey ran into trouble with a different kind of splash — rainy Los Angeles streets. He was more than an hour late to Hollywood's Cinemas Dome for Thursday's premiere of the film, which opens nationwide Dec. 17.

Spacey later apologized to the theater audience and blamed his tardiness on rain and traffic.

"Californians don't know how to drive in the rain," he said.

Simpson lawsuit not pretty

Jessica Simpson has been sued by a California cosmetics company that claims it is still owed nearly \$200,000 for products it supplied for the "Desert" beauty line the singer endorses.

In a lawsuit filed Oct. 21, Cosmojet claims Simpson and Dessert Beauty Inc. failed to pay the full \$1 million it was promised for products it made for the line. Cosmetic retailer Sephora was also named in the suit.

Simpson maintains she was simply a spokeswoman for Dessert and was not responsible for the company's accounting and billing procedures.

Randi Shinder, president of Dessert Beauty, acknowledged receiving almost \$1 million in products made by Cosmojet, but said his company refused payment on a portion of the shipment because it did not "meet the company's high product standards and specifications."

Stories and photos from The Associated Press



Eminem



Country singer Dolly Parton launched her first full-blown tour in a decade last month in Greenville, S.C.

DOLLYWOOD SHINS photo

After 10-year hiatus from touring, Dolly Parton finds crowds still flocking to watch her perform

BY TERRY MORROW

Scraps Howard News Service

The mystery woman with the red hair and green eyes who attended a Dolly Parton concert more than 35 years ago was in the right place at the right time to make music history.

The woman in the audience intrigued Parton. After the show, when Parton signed autographs, she asked the fan for her name.

It was Jolene.

"I said 'I bet you were named after your dad. I bet his name was Joe.' She said, 'No. It's just Jolene.' I said, 'Well, that's the prettiest name I have ever heard.' I'd never heard a name like that before," Parton says.

"I told her that one of these days I'm going to write a song about a girl named Jolene. If you ever hear it, you'll know it's about you."

"I never did hear from her again," "Jolene" went on to become Parton's first hit to cross over from country to pop. Parton tells the story when reflecting about her days on the road.

For decades Parton traveled the world to sing her hits for fans.

She stopped touring 10 years ago, though she continued to perform exclusively in concert at her Dollywood theme park.

Those annual shows benefit her Dollywood Foundation, which supports educational projects across the country.

As for doing full-blown concert tours, Parton figured those were for younger or less-established artists. She didn't think she would miss it.

Then, last year she did a three-month, scaled-down tour to promote her "Halos & Horns" CD.

"I was really, really surprised because I had a good time," she says, "and the people wanted to see me. I had been gone from the road, for the most part, for 10 years."

"I wasn't being played on country radio. I didn't know I had so many fans left. I loved it. They loved it. So I decided

to go back on the road."

For this tour, scheduled to hit 30 cities through mid-December with more coming in 2005, Parton is pulling out the stops.

The "Hello, I'm Dolly" tour, which launched Oct. 14 in Greenville, S.C., is more than a retrospective of her career. It includes new material as well.

A 10-piece band covers everything from bluegrass to gospel to pop.

Parton also does costume changes on stage.

She enters wearing a replica of a Barbara Streisand dress from the movie "Hello, Dolly," and adds and subtracts from that costume throughout the show. She does an "imitation" of Streisand for the un-Streisand-like number "Cowboy Sweetheart."

Parton wants her stage show to reflect her diverse musical styles through the years. In another segment, "I climb up on a piano with a martini glass and holding a big, long cigarette," she says. "It's just fun, goofy stuff."

A puppet of Kenny Rogers is used to recreate hits he had with Parton.

And for the first time in concert, Parton plays the piano for "The Grass Is Blue" and other songs.

"I want to do things people haven't seen me do before," she says.

That includes her choice of songs, some of which have never been on her albums.

Parton covers "Blowing in the Wind," John Lennon's "Imagine" backed with a choir, "Me and Bobby

McGee" and "Hello God," a song that the artist formerly known as Cat Stevens wants to record.

Many of the covers will appear on a new CD titled "Blue Smoke" that Parton is working on. Guests on the new CD will include Judy Collins.

The road, Parton says, can be an exciting place. It also can be where you rediscover yourself.

"I guess people are wanting to see me," she says. "After you get a certain age, you're called a legend. I guess. I'm a 'living legend,' they say. Well, to me, I just seem to be hanging in there."

"I wasn't being played on country radio. I didn't know I had so many fans left. I loved it. They loved it. So I decided to go back on the road."

Dolly Parton
Country singer



Simpson

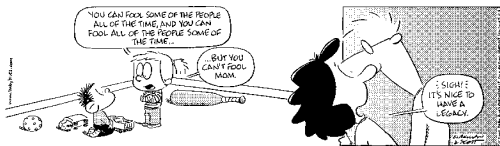
Fox Trot



B.C.



Baby Blues



Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



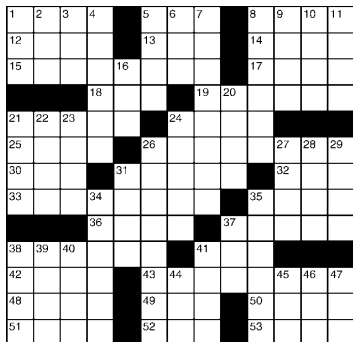
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Make a 3-minute egg
- 5 Stern disciplinarian?
- 8 Release
- 12 "The King —"
- 13 La-la precursor
- 14 Related
- 15 Potential precedent
- 17 Respond to yeast
- 18 Silent
- 19 They're part of the act
- 21 Utterly finished
- 24 Leno's prominence
- 25 Tennessee's state flower
- 26 Valise
- 30 Draw
- 31 Replen-tant
- 32 Yun maiden
- 33 Tough person
- 35 Fiery stone
- 36 Decline
- 37 Overly aggressive
- 38 Play goalie
- 41 Fashionable, and then some
- 42 Satan's specialty
- 43 Display cabinet
- 48 Honeycomb compartment
- 49 Lubricant
- 50 Tom Clancy hero

Down

- 51 Mined-over matter
- 52 Bond, e.g.
- 53 Safe-cracker
- 22 Met melody
- 23 Harbor structure
- 24 Talk a blue streak?
- 26 Unspecified people
- 27 Snakes
- 28 Persian bigwig
- 29 Elusive
- 31 Read bar codes
- 34 Lives
- 35 Vehement protest
- 37 "Bam!"
- 38 Erle's style
- 39 Incessantly
- 40 Dossier
- 41 Sacrosanct
- 44 With it
- 45 Sailor's assent
- 46 Succumb to gravity
- 47 Chang's brother

Answer to Previous Puzzle



11-9

CRYPTOQUIP

V J B Q A H B K B X A Z J M A W X H
 N A F V E Z V H S A O K V S A N .
 V H X O O Z H A B Q K B ' E E

V W M Z E M A S A - K S F K F A W B .
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN A KANGAROO
 BECOMES ILL, I THINK THE PROBLEM MIGHT
 WELL BE LEAPING SICKNESS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals T

Teammates heat up Heisman campaign

BY RALPH D. RUSSO
The Associated Press

COLLEGE STATION, Texas — Just when it looked as if fabulous freshman Adrian Peterson was the front-runner for the Heisman Trophy, Oklahoma teammate Jason White bolstered his own case for a second Brown statue.

The race for college football's most prestigious individual award seems to get more muddled every week. While some contenders have fallen off, such as Purdue's Kyle Orton, most serious candidates keep adding to their credentials.

At least 10 players are having seasons worthy of consideration.

And there are three sets of formidable teammates, making it tough to decipher who the most important player is on some of the nation's best teams.

The best showing by a freshman in the Heisman voting was Herschel Walker's third-place finish in 1980, yet Peterson entered Saturday's game at Texas A&M gathering momentum.

But for the first time, the 19-year-old Peterson was relatively held in check. He ran for 101 yards and a touchdown on 29 carries against the Aggies to reach the century mark for the ninth straight game, but his inexperience showed more than ever.

Peterson was dropped for several big losses, constantly trying to bounce plays outside instead of powering ahead with his sturdy 210-pound frame.

With the Aggies stacking up to stop Peterson, White brought the second-ranked Sooners from five touchdowns behind with 14 points passing and 292 yards passing in a 42-35 victory.

"He's the best," Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops said about his quarterback. "His toughness, he's resilient and he stays calm and he

just keeps competing and makes plays that matter."

White could become the second player to win two Heismans, joining Ohio State tailback Archie Griffin in 1974-75. And as a former winner, White gets a vote — which he's said will go to Peterson.

Like White, California quarterback Aaron Rodgers bolstered his résumé with a comeback victory Saturday, though he got plenty of help from his underdog teammate, J.J. Arrington. Rodgers threw for 275 yards and three scores, while Arrington extended his streak of 100-yard games to eight with 188 and a touchdown in the Bears' 28-27 win over Oregon.

Southern California's pass-run duo of Matt Leinart and Reggie Bush also brought its team back in.

No. 1 USC trailed 13-0 in the first half, but Leinart tossed two touchdown passes, and Bush broke a punt return for a score in the fourth quarter, helping the Trojans beat Oregon State 28-20.

"That guy is incredible," Oregon State wide receiver Mike Hays said, referring to Bush. "You've got to give him credit on that, he kind of made it happen all by himself."

That's why he's a Heisman Trophy candidate, and he showed that tonight.

Only three times has a Heisman winner's teammate finished in the top five in the voting, last in 1983, when Nebraska I-back Mike Rozier won and quarterback Turner Gill was fourth.

Two years ago, Miami quarterback Ken Dorsey (fourth) and running back Willis McGahee (fifth) finished behind winner Carson Palmer.

If the teammates cancel each other out, it could open the way for others, such as Texas' Cedric



Oklahoma running back Adrian Peterson is getting some Heisman Trophy competition from teammate Jason White, who won it last year.

Benson, Utah's Alex Smith, Auburn's Jason Campbell and Michigan's Braylon Edwards.

Benson scored five touchdowns and ran for 141 yards to lead Texas to the best comeback of the day, a 56-35 win over Oklahoma State. The senior fell off the Heisman radar after Texas lost to Oklahoma, but he's having another big year and is on pace to finish his career as one of the top five rushers in Division I-A history.

Smith continued to put up video game-type numbers for the Utes.

The versatile quarterback threw for 291 yards and four touchdowns and ran for 55 yards in Utah's latest rout, 63-31 over Colorado State.

His problem is competition. Utah has won all of its games

going away, and the Mountain West is hardly the Southeastern Conference.

Campbell has come of age in the SEC this season. He's been the steady leader of a national title contender. Plus, he's got three big games left against Georgia, Alabama and probably Tennessee in the SEC title game to stomp for votes.

Wide receivers tend to be under-appreciated by Heisman voters, which hurts Edwards. He probably won't win the award but he could be a factor in what figures to be a tight vote.

The Heisman will be handed out Dec. 11 in New York — and that's about all anyone knows for sure right now.

Ralph D. Russo covers college football for The Associated Press. Write to him at: russo@ap.org

Utes slip to No. 7 in BCS

Critical drop could leave team out of big bowl

BY RALPH D. RUSSO
The Associated Press

Utah slipped one spot to seventh in the Bowl Championship Series standings Monday, a drop that could cost the unbeaten Utes a berth in one of the four big-money bowl games.

The top five in the BCS stayed the same, with Southern California, Oklahoma and Auburn leading the way, followed by California and Wisconsin.

The first and second-place teams in the final standings will play in the Orange Bowl Jan. 4 for the BCS national title.

Utah is trying to become the first team from a non-BCS conference (Mountain West) to play in a BCS game. The Utes can guarantee a spot in what probably would be the Fiesta Bowl — which delivers a payout of about \$14 million — by finishing in the top six. A top-12 finish makes the Utes eligible for consideration, but guarantees nothing.

Texas jumped over Utah this week to take sixth place.

The Longhorns' 56-35 comeback victory over Oklahoma State on Saturday boosted its BCS grade to .7904. Utah's grade (.7511) went up slightly after another lopsided victory — 63-31 over Colorado State. Utah maintained its position in both The Associated Press Top 25 (seventh) and coaches poll (eighth) this week, but the Utes dropped in the computer rankings from sixth to eighth, while the Longhorns moved up to No. 5 in that category.

The AP media poll and ESPN/USA Today poll each account for one-third of a team's BCS grade. A compilation of six computer rankings make up the other third of a team's grade.

Utah is one of six unbeaten teams in Division I-A, along with USC, Oklahoma, Auburn, Wisconsin and Boise State.

The Sooners increased their lead on the idle Tigers, by moving into the No. 1 spot in the computer rankings.

USC, No. 1 in both polls and second in the computer rankings, has a grade of .9847. Oklahoma's grade is .9664, and Auburn's is .9097. The Tigers are third in each poll and according to the computers.

Bryant's accuser ponders filing suit in California

From wire reports

LOS ANGELES — Kobe Bryant's accuser is considering filing her civil suit against the Los Angeles Laker star in Orange County because there is no limit on financial damages in California, one of her attorneys said Sunday.

The 28-year-old woman filed a federal suit in Denver in August, three weeks before the felony sexual assault charge against Bryant was dropped in Eagle County, Colo. Civil justices in Colorado can award damages of no more than \$366,000 for pain and suffering, and the total a plaintiff can win is about \$2.5 million.

Civil cases can be filed in the jurisdiction where the defendant lives as well as where the incident occurred. Bryant lives in Newport Beach with his wife and daughter.

"The more research we do, the more we seem inclined to favor California over Colorado," said attorney Lin Wood, who has repre-

Sports briefs

sented the accuser since early July.

"The limits in Colorado are onerous and unfair," Wood said. "I'm not sure my client could achieve justice. There is a night and day difference in terms of compensation."

Wood said he had conferred with California civil attorneys and will decide within 30 days whether to proceed. Because the action would be in a California state court, the woman could continue to pursue her federal suit in Colorado, where the cases were resolved, Wood said.

Bryant's attorneys could not be reached for comment Sunday.

Bryant, 26, was accused of raping the woman in a resort near Vail, Colo., on June 30, 2003. Pretrial legal wrangling lasted more than a year.

The criminal charge was dropped in September because the woman decided not to testify after struggling on the stand during a mock trial. On the day the charge was dropped, her attorneys handed out to reporters a signed apology statement from Bryant that had been fashioned in secret talks between both parties' attorneys. The apology statement — in which Bryant maintained he believed the encounter was consensual but had come to understand the woman did not — also said no financial settlement had been discussed.

Utah State fires Denney

LOGAN, Utah — Utah State fired football coach Mike Denney after a five-game losing streak and 2-7 start to the season.

Denney and athletic director Randy Spetman met Sunday, a day after a 32-25 loss to Louisiana-Monroe, and Spetman told the coach he was being fired,

sports information director Mike Strauss said Monday.

It was not immediately clear Monday whether Denney would coach the Aggies in their final two games. A news conference was scheduled for later Monday.

Denney is in his fifth season at Utah State and under contract through next year. Denney, who came to Utah State from Montana in 1999, was 18-36 with the Aggies.

Schilling's ankle surgery set

BOSTON — Curt Schilling will have surgery Tuesday on his injured right ankle.

The Red Sox ace was examined by doctors on Sunday.

Schilling has a torn tendon sheath in his right ankle that hobbled him during his first start of the AL championship series against the New York Yankees. At first, doctors thought his season was over, but Dr. Bill Morgan stitched the tendon in place so it didn't flop over the ankle bone.

On the rise in Phoenix

Earnhardt Jr. rekindles Nextel Cup hopes with strong run in Checker Auto Parts 500

BY MIKE HARRIS

The Associated Press

AVONDALE, Ariz. — Dale Earnhardt Jr. thought about it all week long: no more mistakes.

A week after crashing a top-five car and costing himself precious points in the NASCAR Nextel Cup championship chase, Earnhardt did everything right in winning Sunday at Phoenix International Raceway and moving solidly back into the points picture with two races remaining.

"It's been bothering me all week," Earnhardt said, alluding to a late-race collision with rookie Carl Edwards the previous week at Atlanta. "I just didn't want to make a mistake like I did last week and wanted to put ourselves back in position to run for the championship."

He did just that, jumping from fifth to third in the standings and moving within 47 points of series leader Kurt Busch, who had to overcome a couple of mistakes to

finish 10th Sunday. The top four drivers are separated by just 48 points heading into next Sunday's race at Darlington.

This time, Junior, who started the day 98 points behind Busch, was steady when it mattered most.

Earnhardt, who had a dominant car through most of the Checker Auto Parts 500, leading a race-high 118 laps, was in third place, trailing Jeff Gordon and Casey Mears when a caution came out on lap 282 of the race scheduled to go 312.

Junior argued with crew chief Tony Eury over the radio, lobbying to pit for tires, but Eury made him stay on the track and maintain his position.

Eury, known as "Tony Sr.," said he insisted Earnhardt stay out because it was so hard to pass lapped cars on the mile oval and "it was just better to keep track position."

Earnhardt was a bit sheepish when asked about the argument.

"Yeah, I was just getting worried, man," he said. "I cannot control myself inside a race car. I want tires, this and that and the other. I didn't want to lose."

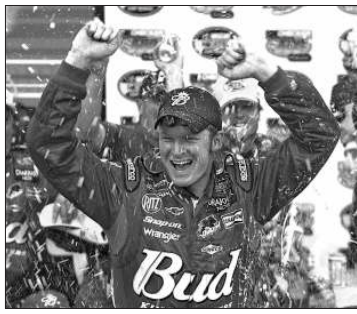
"I told Tony Sr., 'The car's covering the field the best we ever did.' We've had good race cars and won races but nobody could win with this car today and I didn't want to lose this race."

He didn't. And, after reaching Victory Lane, Earnhardt also was careful to watch his language. The use of a vulgarism during a live TV interview after his last victory — Oct. 3 at Talladega — cost him \$10,000 and, far more important, 25 points.

"I was really scared that I might slip up because I have a lot of bad words in my vocabulary," Earnhardt said. "I will always from here on out be nervous about that. Tony Sr. came up to me before I got out [of the car] and said, 'Now, don't cuss.' I was glad he reminded me because you get excited."



Ryan Newman (12) and Mark Martin (6) avoid hitting Kurt Busch after Busch spun out during Sunday's NASCAR race in Avondale, Ariz. Newman finished second behind Dale Earnhardt Jr. Busch finished 10th and maintained his hold on first place in the Nextel Cup standings, 41 points ahead of Jeff Gordon.



Dale Earnhardt Jr. celebrates after winning the NASCAR Checker Auto Parts 500 on Sunday at Phoenix International Raceway in Avondale, Ariz. Earnhardt moved from fifth to third in the Nextel Cup standings.

After staying out during the caution, Earnhardt wound up passing Mears for second place on lap 298, moments before another caution came out for Jamie McMurray's wreck.

On the restart on lap 303, Earnhardt swung his No. 8 Chevrolet to the inside of Gordon's car, pulled alongside and shot into the lead.

"Gordon was a sitting duck there at the end," Earnhardt said. "His car was terrible. He was lucky just to get what he got."

Gordon agreed.

"Junior had a dominant car all day long and we needed it to go green the whole way to have any chance," he said.

Earnhardt began to pull away when Mears, with a tire going flat, spun into the wall, bringing out yet another yellow flag on lap 307.

Moments later, Robby Gordon's engine blew. NASCAR stopped the cars on track on lap 310 as safety workers cleaned up the debris from Mears' crash and the oil from Gordon's engine failure.

Once the race resumed, NASCAR ordered one extra lap of caution, then finished with only the second green-white-checker

overtime since the rule was adopted earlier this year in hopes fans would always see a racing finish.

Earnhardt easily pulled away once the green flag waved, running off to his sixth win of the season and second straight Phoenix victory. Newman, who struggled most of the day after starting from the pole, came in at grand second place from Jeff Gordon.

Kevin Harvick finished fourth, followed by rookie Casey Kahne, Jimmie Johnson, Rusty Wallace, Tony Stewart, Robby Labonte and Busch.

Johnson, whose string of three straight victories ended, fell from second to fourth in the points, 48 behind Busch.

Most of the title contenders struggled. Newman and Johnson lost laps when they pitted for what they thought were flat tires. Busch, who rebounded from an engine failure that left him 42nd at Atlanta, also had to bounce back Sunday after a spinout and crew error.

"I made a mistake early on with traffic and then the crew made a mistake running us out of fuel," he said. "Then, at the end, there were lapped cars running side-by-side on this tight oval. It's not what we expected, but it was a good day."



France's Sebastien Bourdais sprays champagne after winning the season's final race and capturing his first Champ Car championship on Sunday in Mexico City.

Bourdais' dominant season ends fittingly

By JOHN RICE

The Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — Sebastien Bourdais wanted it all, and he got it.

"I think it can be better, to celebrate the championship by winning the race, having done the pole position and set the fastest lap," he said Sunday after claiming his first Champ Car title with a victory in the season-ending Mexican Grand Prix.

"It's just been a dominating weekend."

Bourdais overcame a spin and a sticky gearbox to win, beating teammate Bruno Junqueira with a flag-to-flag victory.

"I'm really, really, really glad it's over," Bourdais said. "It's a whole lot of pressure on a 25-year-old guy."

Until he saw the checkered flag, the Frenchman took nothing for granted.

"I was so scared about, you know, not being able to give it a clear shot with an incident at the start or mechanical failure," he explained.

Bourdais managed to win despite sliding on

the 42nd lap. The slip cost him about 12 seconds of the lead he held over Junqueira.

The Brazilian was runner-up in the standings for the third year in a row and wound up second in the race, more than 5 seconds behind.

Bourdais started on the pole and never trailed, charging to his seventh victory of the season even though a ninth-place finish would have guaranteed him the championship.

"At some point it becomes a question of honor," he said. "You want to win the race so badly."

Bourdais scored 369 points to 341 for Junqueira.

Rookie of the year A.J. Allmendinger was third in the race, just ahead of rookie Justin Wilson.

Bourdais steadily built a lead of nearly 18 seconds over Junqueira through the first 41 laps on the 2.786-mile road course.

But he remained nervous.

"I couldn't prevent myself from thinking

about a crash," he said. "I couldn't help having the picture coming through my mind."

Bourdais put a wheel onto the grass as he passed through a section of shadow while trying to get by Mario Dominguez and took a spin just before the track veers oddly through a baseball stadium.

He feared the worst.

"I was so afraid to kill the engine at that time that I kept my foot down, spun the wheel as hard as I could," Bourdais said. "It was just a scary moment for a minute or two, then it came back to normal."

He said he also was fighting with a gearbox that was sticky between second and third gears in the late going.

Bourdais narrowly avoided a crunch on the final lap when Alex Tagliani had to hit brakes hard with Bourdais and Michel Jourdain Jr. nearby.

It was the fifth Champ Car title for Newman/Haas, which has struck with the series even as other major teams bolted to the rival Indy Racing League. Bourdais was rookie of the year last season for Newman/Haas.

Goosen overtakes Tiger final day

Woods falters in 2004 PGA finale

BY PAUL NEWBERRY

The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Tiger Woods tried to get a read on Retief Goosen when they faced each other in the Presidents Cup.

Forget about it.

"I mean, I played him in two matches and he didn't say one single word," Woods said, smiling at the memory. "That's hard to say."

It was more of the same Sunday.

Goosen was as unflappable as any in the Tour Championship, becoming only the third player to knock Woods out of a 54-hole lead. The South African shot a bogey-free 64 for a stunningly easy four-stroke victory at East Lake.

As usual, Goosen went about his business with a stoic demeanor that borders on indifference. No fist pumping, just a glimmer of a smile when it was over.

This wasn't some sort of gamesmanship, designed to psyche out his opponents.

No, this was just Goosen being Goosen.

"Some players get fired up," he said. "Obviously, Tiger has a way of getting fired up and showing it. The first players do that. Every moment of when I'm out there playing, I might not show it."

Certainly, no one would have guessed that Goosen was going to be the final round by a winner in the 18-year history of the season-ending tournament.

Woods is one of the players. "Woods said, 'We all know that. You don't win two U.S. Opens by being erratic.'"

Woods and Jay Haas helped out, too.

They shared the lead going to the final round, four strokes ahead of the field. But, when both of them started poorly, Goosen seized the opportunity.

"I was very surprised that Jay and Tiger were a couple over fairly soon," Goosen said.

It was a rare collapse by Woods, whose shaky putter contributed to bogeys on three of the first seven holes. Then, he couldn't keep up with Goosen down the stretch, closing with a 2-over 72 to finish second.

"I think everybody is surprised," Goosen said. "We all thought he was going to be the guy to beat."

When 50, was the oldest player ever to qualify for the Tour Championship. He sure looked like an old man on the way to 75, including a double-bogey on 16 that finished him off. He has gone 277 events and 11 years since his last PGA Tour victory.

"The way play rounds like I did the first three days, I feel like I can still do this," Haas said. "When I play like I did today, I feel like I'm done."

Woods clinched his victory at the 16th, a daunting 481-yard hole. After driving into the rough, he smoked a 5-iron from 195 yards, then dropped it in front of the flag and stopped 3 feet away.

He tapped in the putt for the



AP photos

Retief Goosen, top, shot 64 Sunday to become just the third player to wrest a 54-hole lead from Tiger Woods, above.

only birdie on the hole in the final round.

"It's just one of those shots that came off at the right time," Goosen said nonchalantly. "I wasn't trying to hit it dead at the flag, just a touch left. But those things happen."

Goosen finished at 11-under 269 and earned \$10.8 million, a sweet way to finish a year in which he won his second U.S. Open in four years, missed five weeks after injuring himself on a jet ski, and wound up with his first multiple-win season on the PGA Tour.

Losing a 54-hole lead almost never happens to Woods, although this has been a year like no other for him.

He had gone five years without blowing a 36-hole lead, then he did on consecutive weekends in May. Woods won 14 consecutive times when he had at least a share of the 54-hole lead, only to see that streak ended in a familiar place.

The last time Woods lost when taking a lead to Sunday was at East Lake in the 2000 Tour Championship, won by Phil Mickelson. The losing member of that elite group is Ed Fiori, who passed Woods at the 1996 Quad City Classic, his third professional start.

"Very disappointing," Woods said. "I felt like I had a golden opportunity to win a tournament."

Woods ended the season with only one victory — the Match Play Championship in late February — to match the lowest output in his nine years on tour. He has gone 20 stroke-play tournaments without a trophy, the longest drought of his career.

NBA scoreboard

Eastern Conference

| Atlantic Division | | Pct | GB |
|-------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Toronto | W 11-1 | .550 | — |
| Boston | W 10-2 | .500 | 1 1/2 |
| New Jersey | W 9-3 | .333 | 3 1/2 |
| Philadelphia | W 8-4 | .333 | 4 1/2 |
| New York | W 7-5 | .300 | 2 1/2 |

| Southeast Division | | Pct | GB |
|--------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Miami | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| Orlando | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Washington | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |
| Charlotte | W 7-5 | .300 | 4 1/2 |
| Atlanta | W 6-6 | .300 | 5 1/2 |

| Central Division | | Pct | GB |
|------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Indiana | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| Detroit | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Chicago | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |
| Cleveland | W 7-5 | .300 | 4 1/2 |

Western Conference

| Southwest Division | | Pct | GB |
|--------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Dallas | W 11-1 | .550 | — |
| San Antonio | W 10-2 | .500 | 1 1/2 |
| Memphis | W 9-3 | .450 | 3 1/2 |
| New Orleans | W 8-4 | .333 | 4 1/2 |

| Northwest Division | | Pct | GB |
|--------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Utah | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| Minnesota | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Seattle | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |
| Portland | W 7-5 | .300 | 4 1/2 |

| Pacific Division | | Pct | GB |
|------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Phoenix | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| L.A. Clippers | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Golden State | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |
| Sacramento | W 7-5 | .300 | 4 1/2 |

| Sunday's games | | Pct | GB |
|-----------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Toronto 101, Portland 97 | W 11-1 | .550 | — |
| Seattle 111, San Antonio 94 | W 10-2 | .500 | 1 1/2 |
| L.A. Lakers 106, Atlanta 96 | W 9-3 | .450 | 3 1/2 |

| Monday's games | | Pct | GB |
|----------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Golden State 91, Dallas 88 | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| Denver at Utah | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Detroit at L.A. Clippers | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Tuesday's games | | Pct | GB |
|----------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Dallas at Orlando | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| Cleveland at Atlanta | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Washington at Miami | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Wednesday's games | | Pct | GB |
|------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Portland at New Jersey | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| Phoenix at Cleveland | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| L.A. Lakers at Memphis | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Thursday's games | | Pct | GB |
|----------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Charlotte at Milwaukee | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| L.A. Lakers at New Orleans | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Memphis at Houston | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Friday's games | | Pct | GB |
|--------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Toronto at Sacramento | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| Orlando at Washington | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Portland at Philadelphia | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Saturday's games | | Pct | GB |
|------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Phoenix at Cleveland | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| L.A. Lakers at Memphis | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Charlotte at Milwaukee | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Sunday's games | | Pct | GB |
|-----------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Toronto 101, Portland 97 | W 11-1 | .550 | — |
| Seattle 111, San Antonio 94 | W 10-2 | .500 | 1 1/2 |
| L.A. Lakers 106, Atlanta 96 | W 9-3 | .450 | 3 1/2 |

| Monday's games | | Pct | GB |
|----------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Golden State 91, Dallas 88 | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| Denver at Utah | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Detroit at L.A. Clippers | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Tuesday's games | | Pct | GB |
|----------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Dallas at Orlando | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| Cleveland at Atlanta | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Washington at Miami | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Wednesday's games | | Pct | GB |
|------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Portland at New Jersey | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| Phoenix at Cleveland | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| L.A. Lakers at Memphis | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Thursday's games | | Pct | GB |
|----------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Charlotte at Milwaukee | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| L.A. Lakers at New Orleans | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Memphis at Houston | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Friday's games | | Pct | GB |
|--------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Toronto at Sacramento | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| Orlando at Washington | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Portland at Philadelphia | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Saturday's games | | Pct | GB |
|------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Phoenix at Cleveland | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| L.A. Lakers at Memphis | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Charlotte at Milwaukee | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Sunday's games | | Pct | GB |
|-----------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Toronto 101, Portland 97 | W 11-1 | .550 | — |
| Seattle 111, San Antonio 94 | W 10-2 | .500 | 1 1/2 |
| L.A. Lakers 106, Atlanta 96 | W 9-3 | .450 | 3 1/2 |

| Monday's games | | Pct | GB |
|----------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Golden State 91, Dallas 88 | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| Denver at Utah | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Detroit at L.A. Clippers | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Tuesday's games | | Pct | GB |
|----------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Dallas at Orlando | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| Cleveland at Atlanta | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Washington at Miami | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Wednesday's games | | Pct | GB |
|------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Portland at New Jersey | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| Phoenix at Cleveland | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| L.A. Lakers at Memphis | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Thursday's games | | Pct | GB |
|----------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Charlotte at Milwaukee | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| L.A. Lakers at New Orleans | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Memphis at Houston | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Friday's games | | Pct | GB |
|--------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Toronto at Sacramento | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| Orlando at Washington | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Portland at Philadelphia | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Saturday's games | | Pct | GB |
|------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Phoenix at Cleveland | W 10-2 | .500 | — |
| L.A. Lakers at Memphis | W 9-3 | .450 | 1 1/2 |
| Charlotte at Milwaukee | W 8-4 | .333 | 3 1/2 |

| Sunday's games | | Pct | GB |
|-----------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Toronto 101, Portland 97 | W 11-1 | .550 | — |
| Seattle 111, San Antonio 94 | W 10-2 | .500 | 1 1/2 |
| L.A. Lakers 106, Atlanta 96 | W 9-3 | .450 | 3 1/2 |



San Antonio Spurs' Manu Ginobili, left, falls over Seattle SuperSonics' Nick Collison during the second quarter in Seattle on Sunday. Ginobili scored 21 points but the Spurs fell to the Sonics 113-94.

Fortson outmuscles Spurs in Sonics' win

The Associated Press

SEATTLE — In tough-guy fight Danny Fortson, the Seattle SuperSonics finally may have added the muscle they long have needed under the basket.

Rashard Lewis scored 27 points and Ray Allen added 24, leading the Sonics to a 113-94 victory over the San Antonio Spurs on Sunday night.

The 6-foot-8 Fortson, acquired in a trade with Dallas during the offseason, had 15 points and 13 rebounds for the Sonics, who snapped a seven-game losing streak to the Spurs. It was Seattle's first win over San Antonio since March 29, 2002.

"I love him, man," starting center Jerome James said of Fortson, an eight-year veteran with his fifth NBA team. "He's a dog down there in the paint, a big strong body. Even in practice, he's a tough guy to guard because he's so big and so nasty."

"We've got enough short, finesse dudes," James said. "We need some elbow-throwing dudes and Danny Fortson is one of them. I appreciate having him on the team."

The Sonics won their second straight at home, after losing their season opener by 30 points to the Clippers in Los Angeles last week.

Antonio Daniels added 14 points off the bench for Seattle, 10 in the final quarter. Daniels' three-pointer gave Seattle a 99-85 lead with 3:36 left. Allen's three-pointer with 1:59 remaining put the Sonics in front 107-89.

Tony Parker and Manu Ginobili led the Spurs with 21 points each.

Brent Barry returned to Seattle after signing with San Antonio as a free agent during the offseason. He had eight points off the bench, including two three-pointers.

Tim Duncan, who has led the Spurs to two NBA titles, has a superb shooting game, finishing with 17 points on 4-for-16 shooting. He also had 10 rebounds.

Roundup

Raptors 101, Trail Blazers 97: In Toronto, Vince Carter had 25 points, including a go-ahead three-pointer with 4.8 seconds left, to help the Raptors to their best start in franchise history with three straight wins.

But not all is well in Toronto. The attendance of 13,863 was the smallest home crowd in the Raptors' 10-year history. Toronto went 33-49 last season, missing the playoffs for the second straight year, and Carter, a five-time All-Star, asked for a trade this summer.

Zach Randolph had 33 points and 15 rebounds for the Trail Blazers. Randolph started the game despite missing the team flight to Toronto on Saturday. He was fined and had to pay his own way. He said he overslept after his alarm clock didn't go off.

Lakers 106, Hawks 90: In Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant scored 24 points, Caron Butler added 22 and the Los Angeles Lakers handed Atlanta its third straight lopsided loss.

Bryant shot 6-for-12 from the floor and 11-for-17 from the foul line. He also had six assists and five rebounds.

Butler, who shot 10-for-14, had a total of 26 points in his first three games for the Lakers. Butler came to Los Angeles from Miami along with Lamar Odom and Brian Grant in the offseason trade that sent Shaquille O'Neal to the Heat.

Chris Mihm had 19 points, 10 rebounds and four blocked shots for the Lakers (2-2), who snapped a two-game losing streak. Tim Brown had 15 points and five assists; Odom added 11 points and 11 rebounds; and Jmune Jones also added 11.

At Harrington had 22 points for Atlanta, which has lost its three games by a total of 67 points.

Perfect: McNabb gets earful from Owens

PERFECT, FROM BACK PAGE

No wonder Owens was screaming instead of strutting a week after celebrating a touchdown by imitating Ravens star Ray Lewis' pregame dance. Owens, coming off five consecutive 100-yard games, didn't catch his first pass until Pittsburgh led 21-0 and was seen yelling at quarterback Donovan McNabb on the sidelines.

Owens ended with seven catches for 53 yards, and a heavily pressured McNabb was 15-for-24 for 109 yards and an interception.

"That just wasn't our offense out there, but it happens," McNabb said. "We just didn't first team undefeated that lost."

McNabb and Owens downplayed the shouting incident, with both saying Owens was only trying to encourage the quarterback.

"When things aren't happening, you get frustrated," McNabb said. "He was telling me to be positive about everything. I'm usually the guy to provide confidence, but today he was that guy."

The Steelers didn't miss injured running back Duane Staley (hamstring), the former 1,000-yard Eagles rusher, as their offensive line opened holes big enough for, well, a Bus to run through. Bettis, the No. 6 rusher in NFL history, gained only 129 yards in Pittsburgh's first seven games and was barely averaging a yard per carry until getting 65 yards against New England.

Everybody assumed Jerome Bettis couldn't get it done any longer," said Bettis, a backup most of the last two seasons who had his best game with 163 yards against Cleveland in 2001. "People were asking, 'Why is he still here?' I'm still here for a reason."

Ward said, "We have confidence in Jerome Bettis — he is the Pittsburgh Steelers."

A week after outstrutting New England 21-5, the Steelers out-ran the Eagles 252-23 and out-gained them 420-111 to end Philadelphia's nine-game road winning streak.

Maybe it was appropriate that many members of the 1979 Super Bowl champion Steelers were in attendance, because this was exactly the kind of commanding performance on both sides of the ball those Steelers were known for.

The 1978 Steelers were the only other team in franchise history to start 7-1, en route to a 14-2 record and a Super Bowl title.

Just like the New England game, this one was decided early. The Steelers came out running right at the Eagles, partly to negate Philadelphia's blitz, and Roethlisberger passed only two times on an 11-play, 80-drive finished off by Roethlisberger's 16-yard scramble on third-and-13 and Ward's first career scoring run.

Roethlisberger threw TD passes on the next two drives.

Now, the Steelers have become an upper-tier club others will focus on beating as teams spend the second half of the season positioning themselves for the playoffs.

"Everybody's gunning for us now," linebacker Joey Porter said.

The Steelers believe they're ready for the role reversal after outscoring the Patriots and Eagles 61-23 and outgaining them 337-109.

"It gives us a lot of confidence," Bettis said. "Early in the season, people were saying, 'Who are they playing?' This shows we can play against anybody."

Seahawks, Broncos roll to remain in first place

The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Simply agrees with the Seattle Seahawks. They stripped-down game plan was still too complicated for the San Francisco 49ers.

Darrell Jackson caught two long touchdown passes from Matt Hasselbeck, and Shaun Alexander rushed for 160 yards and two scores in the Seahawks' 42-27 victory Sunday.

Jackson had five catches for 114 yards on a sprained ankle, and Kovan Robinson also caught a TD pass for the Seahawks (5-3), who stop the NFC

NFL roundup

West with their second victory following three straight losses.

Coach Mike Holmgren stuck with the plan that stopped the skid last week against Carolina, sacrificing much of his beloved West Coast gadgetry to keep his talented skill players working at a break pace in a straightforward scheme.

"It's just like in my high school," said Alexander, who capped two long second-quarter drives with short TD runs. "Our coaches said, 'You know what, if we can just run three plays well, we'll probably win the state championship. It's simple.' Of course, the NFL is a little complex, so we need more than one more than three."

"It's a really simpleified offense, but we have enough talent to really make things simple and still make great plays."

Seattle didn't need much trickery to extend the woeful 49ers' worst start since 1979. Hasselbeck was 17-for-28 for 285 yards while the Seahawks marched to 453 yards of offense, with Alexander's shifty running setting up Seattle's passing game.

"We condensed some things down, and guys are just executing a lot better now," Holmgren said. "If Matt can throw the ball effectively and we can gain some yards rushing, we're going to be able to do some good things."

Broncos 31, Texans 13: Unlike last week, Rod Smith got to enjoy his records and Jake Plummer got to celebrate his touchdowns.

Smith became Denver's career leader in receptions and touchdown catches, and Plummer threw for four scores for the second straight game to help the Broncos win at home.

The victory wiped away bad memories from the previous week against the Falcons, when Plummer threw for 499 yards and four touchdowns but the Broncos (6-3) lost their second straight game, in large part due to his three interceptions.

"The great thing about Jake is that he's pretty tough on himself," Broncos coach Mike Shanahan said. "By no means is every game going to be perfect, but you do have to be able to wipe it out, be



Broncos wide receiver Rod Smith is pushed out of bounds by Texans cornerback Duane Staley after catching a pass in the second quarter.

tough on yourself and come back and compete."

In the first quarter, Smith caught his 67th career pass to surpass Shannon Sharpe on the team's receptions list. Later, Smith caught a 13-yard touchdown for his 56th score receiving, also passing Sharpe. Last year, Smith became the team's leader in yards receiving, meaning he now holds all of Denver's most significant receiving records.

Houston (4-4) was seeking the first three-game winning streak in franchise history and a taste of first place in the AFC South, but the Texans were overwhelmed.

Bills 22, Jets 17: Playing in the face of a jets' mild wind, Willis McGahee sparked Buffalo's ball-control offense.

McGahee finished with a career-high 132 yards and a touchdown, his third 100-yard rushing game in his third career start.

Buffalo (3-5) won its third game in four outings, and third straight at home — all with McGahee as a starter. And the weather has played a factor in all three victories, with winds of 25 mph or stronger blowing off Lake Erie.

And the Bills beat the Jets (6-2), a team coming off a 41-14 win over Miami last Monday, and attempting to match its best start in franchise history.

The Jets' problems might be worse than the game's outcome. Quarterback Chad Pennington bruised his right shoulder and did not return after he was sacked for a 13-yard loss midway through the fourth quarter.

Redskins 17, Lions 10: In Detroit, Clinton Portis beat the Lions with his legs and right arm. Portis

ran for 147 yards on 34 carries and threw a tiebreaking touchdown pass.

Detroit (4-4) rallied late, but its hopes for a tying drive ended at the Washington 20 as time expired.

With back-to-back 21-yard gains to open the second half, Portis became the first player to run for 100 yards against Detroit this season. Those powerful runs with sharp cutbacks set up his 15-yard pass to Laveranues Coles that gave Washington a 10-3 lead.

Taylor Jacobs blocked a punt and Walt Harris scooped up the ball and returned it 13 yards to put the Redskins (3-5) ahead by 14.

Cardinals 24, Dolphins 13: To end a 17-game road losing streak, Arizona merely needed to play a visit to Miami.

The Cardinals met their match in ineptitude, benefited from two critical penalties and drove 70 yards in the final 2 minutes for a touchdown. Larry Fitzgerald caught the winning score on a 2-yard pass from Josh McDowell with 19 seconds left after a holding penalty against Miami negated a sack and gave the Cardinals first-and-goal.

The road win was the first since Oct. 6, 2002, for Arizona (3-5). The Dolphins (1-8), who have the league's worst record, are one defeat from their first losing season since 1988.

Arizona rallied twice in the second half, overcoming a 12-3 deficit with 18½ minutes left after Miami quarterback Jay Fiedler was sidelined with a shoulder stinger. The margin of defeat was an extra point missed in the first quarter by Bill Gramatica.

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Brees opens flood Gates

Chargers QB tosses 3 TDs to TE in rout

BY BERNIE WILSON
The Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — These clearly are not the San Diego Chargers of the recent gloomy past. They can pass. They can catch. They can play defense. And even with LaDainian Tomlinson hurting, they can win big.

In routing the New Orleans Saints 43-17 on Sunday, they even showed a bit of a swagger.

"We go on the field and say, 'We can beat these guys,'" quarterback Drew Brees said. "That's our attitude. It's such a dramatic difference from last year. We're almost disappointed that the bye's coming because we just want to keep going."

It was San Diego's highest-scoring game since beating the Miami Dolphins 45-20 on Dec. 27, 1993. The Chargers have scored 85 points in consecutive games.

Brees, the quarterback the front office didn't want coming into this season, threw four more touchdown passes — three to tight end Antonio Gates — and the Chargers (6-3) won their third straight game and fifth in six games.

Brees has thrown nine touchdown passes in two straight blow-out wins, pushing his season total to 18, against just three interceptions. Last year he threw 15 interceptions and 11 touchdowns, was benched for five games and pulled from two others.

Brees was 22-for-36 for 257 yards on Sunday. Last week he threw a career-high five TD pass-



Chargers tight end Antonio Gates celebrates the second of his three touchdown passes during the third quarter of San Diego's 43-17 win.

es in a 42-10 win over Oakland. He hasn't thrown an interception in three straight games, and in six of the last seven.

"If you have a quarterback you have confidence in, you always believe that you can win the game," coach Marty Schottenheimer said.

The Chargers are off next Sunday, so Tomlinson can rest his strained groin, which has slowed him for five games.

Tomlinson hasn't cracked 100 yards in any of those games, and on Sunday was held to just 36 yards on 17 carries, with one touchdown.

Even so, he's happy about the way Brees and the receivers, particularly Gates and Keenan McCardell, have made the Chargers a high-scoring threat.

"It's so much better, because guys can't just focus on me," Tomlinson said. "They've got many other weapons to worry about. It feels good to look up and Drew hits Antonio way down the field, or Keenan way down the field, for a big play, man. It's an awesome feeling."

Brees' inconsistent play last year, when they were an NFL-worst 4-12, led the Chargers to get Philip Rivers in a draft-day deal with the New York Giants.

Rivers made his pro debut with 404 left and the Chargers leading 43-17. He handed off three straight times, then took a knee three times to run out the clock.

The Saints (3-5) have lost four of five.

"We couldn't cover the tight end," New Orleans coach Jim Haslett said. "I think he's one of the best tight ends in the league, if not the best."

To put the Chargers' recent struggles in perspective, Gates became the first Chargers receiver to catch three touchdown passes since Tony Martin did it against Baltimore on Sept. 28, 1997.

Gates might have had four TDs, but he couldn't hold onto a pass from McCardell in the second quarter, one of several critical plays the Chargers ran. He had five catches for 56 yards.

Gates caught touchdown passes of 7 and 2 yards on consecutive drives late in the third quarter to give San Diego a 36-7 lead.

Gates' third TD of the day was set up when Steve Foley forced Aaron Brooks and forced a fumble that Stephen Cooper recovered at the New Orleans 40. The Chargers gained 33 yards when Sedrick Hodge was called for pass interference against Gates, giving San Diego the ball on the 2.



Patriots linebacker Mike Vrabel, who lined up on offense, beats the Rams' Bryce Fisher for a touchdown in the second quarter.

Vinatieri has big hand in Pats' win over Rams

BY R.B. FALLSTROM
The Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Adam Vinatieri dealt another jarring blow to the St. Louis Rams, helping the New England Patriots start a new streak.

Vinatieri kicked a season-best four field goals and threw his first career touchdown pass in New England's 40-22 victory over the St. Louis Rams on Sunday.

The kicker's 4-yard toss to Troy Brown on a fake field goal gave the banged-up but resourceful Patriots their first double-digit lead, and helped them rebound after their NFL-record 18-game regular-season winning streak ended last week.

Vinatieri's 48-yard field goal was the margin of victory in the Patriots' 20-17 victory over the Rams in the Super Bowl. He was booed before each attempt Sunday.

"I'll tell you, they're probably not a big fan of the right now," Vinatieri said. "Or any of us."

The Patriots (7-1) were lined up for a 22-yard field goal midway through the third quarter when Brown feigned heading for the New England sideline, then lined up alone when none of the Rams on the field spotted the subterfuge.

"I was thinking, 'Hurry up and snap the ball,'" Brown said.

Coach Mike Martz was one of the few Rams to notice, and he was screaming for a timeout as Patriots long snapper Lonnie Paxton quickly got the ball to Vinatieri, who had an easy toss to Brown for a 22-14 lead.

"I'm sure my eyes were pretty wide on that one," Vinatieri said. "I just wanted to make sure I'd catch it and throw a decent pass. I knew if I got it anywhere close to Troy, he's got such good hands that he'd catch it."

St. Louis never recovered.

"I don't think that was the trickiest thing in the world," Martz said. "That's ridiculous, we've got to pay more attention than that."

Covery Dillon returned to the lineup with 112 yards rushing on 25 carries and a touchdown for the Patriots, who had won 21 in a

row counting the postseason before losing to Pittsburgh last week.

Dillon missed last week with a thigh injury.

More important, the Patriots compensated for an injury-ravaged secondary by sacking Marc Bulger five times, forcing a fumble and intercepting a tipped ball. Bulger was routinely flushed out of the pocket.

Martz boiled down the offensive woes to a single word.

Protection.

"You were at the game, I imagine," Martz told a reporter. "You saw the sacks and holding penalties. I'd like to have been in a lot of four-wide receiver [packages], but they were getting to us with a three-man front."

New England was without both starting cornerbacks, then lost one of the fill-ins, Asante Samuel, with an undisclosed arm injury in the first quarter. That forced them to use Brown, a wide receiver, at times in the secondary. Earthwind Moreland, who replaced Samuel, was signed Saturday.

Bulger was 23-for-33 for 285 yards and two touchdowns for the Rams (4-4), who have lost twice at home this season. They had a 15-game regular-season home winning streak before losing in overtime to the Saints in September but now have dropped two of the last three.

St. Louis had been 4-0 after the bye week under Martz, but did not benefit from an extra day of practice in the game week. This was their worst loss at home in his five seasons and it was the first time they'd allowed 40 points since a 49-10 loss at Kansas City on Dec. 8, 2002.

In the previous 18 games at home, counting the postseason, the Rams had lost twice — both times in overtime.

Tom Brady was 18-for-31 for 234 yards and the first of his two touchdown passes also was an oddity, with linebacker Mike Vrabel on the receiving end of a 2-yard play in the second quarter. Vrabel has three career touchdown receptions, one of them coming in the Super Bowl last season.

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Defenders add to Panthers' woes

Oakland wins on late Janikowski field goal, drops Carolina to 1-7

BY JENNA FRYER
The Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — The Carolina Panthers are in a free fall, winless at home this season and losers of six straight.

Still, they insist they aren't as bad as their record, even after a 27-24 loss to the Oakland Raiders on Sunday dropped them to 1-7.

"No way are we the worst team in the league. Anyone who thinks we are needs to look at our schedule and how we lose the games," safety Mike Minter said. "If we cut out critical mistakes, we'll win one game."

"That's all we need. One win will make us feel a little better about ourselves."

Carolina, which won the NFC title last season, couldn't have felt any worse than it did after losing to the Raiders (3-6).

A critical pass-interference penalty set up Sebastian Janikowski's 19-yard field goal with 6 seconds to play. Oakland used two Carolina castoffs — quarterback Kerry Collins and special teams standout Jarrod Cooper — to snap its five-game losing streak.

Collins, the first draft pick in Carolina history, was vilified when he left — quitting the team midway through the 1998 season. So leading the Raiders on the winning drive was sweet satisfaction.

"It was a little redemption," said Collins, who passed for 231 yards but threw his 12th interception of the season. "Obviously, I didn't leave here under the best circumstances. But one of the things I learned is to keep plugging away."

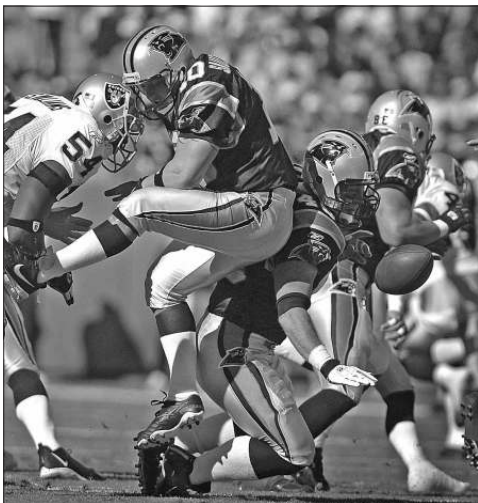
Cooper is learning that now.

A popular special teams player for four years in Carolina, he was waived by the Panthers two weeks ago. The move came after the team learned he had been arrested for driving without a license and giving police false information.

Cooper struggled with his emotions throughout the game, even after his 17-yard sack of Jake Delhomme.

"I didn't know if I was going to laugh or cry," Cooper said. "So I just ran away from my, Cooper said. 'I love those guys, every one of them. I hate to be gone, so it was pretty rough for me.'"

Still, he found some joy in celebrating a win set up by two rushing touchdowns from Tyrone Wheatley and one from Amos Zereoue.



CHARLOTTE OBSERVER/RET

Carolina Panthers punter Todd Sauerbren has his punt blocked by the Raiders' defense in the first quarter of their game on Sunday. The Raiders won 27-24 to snap a five-game losing streak.

In a game of errors, the most critical one came late.

After Carolina tied it at 24 with 2:25 to play, Collins threw completions of 19 and 12 yards to move the Raiders into Carolina territory.

His next pass was incomplete to Doug Gabriel near the goal line, but Dante Wesley was flagged for pass interference. The 38-yard penalty gave Oakland the ball at the 4, and Janikowski kicked the winner three plays later.

"I think it was a bad call," Wesley said. "One official said it was pass interference, and the other said it wasn't. I hate it had to come down to a pass interference."

The Panthers were done in by their own mistakes most of the day.

Todd Sauerbren's blocked punt set up the first of Wheatley's two 1-yard TD plunges and a myriad of other errors cost Carolina.

Collins' interception of Collins was negated when Julius Peppers was called for being offside. Collins then threw 20 yards to Ronald Curry on the next play, setting up Zereoue's 7-yard TD run that gave the Raiders a 24-14 lead with 9:14 to play.

Delhomme was most of the game despite passing for 299 yards and three touchdowns. His passes sailed over receivers' heads or out of bounds, ruining several opportunities.

Bucs' offense steps up in shootout with Chiefs

BY FRED GOODALL
The Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Tampa Bay coach Jon Gruden challenged his offense.

To keep up with the high-scoring Kansas City Chiefs, the Buccaneers needed to do what they hadn't all season — score touchdowns in bunches.

"It was a big game and we were called out, and I don't think any of us liked that," receiver Joe Jurevich said after the Bucs took another step toward saving their season with a 34-31 victory Sunday.

Moving the ball almost at will against Kansas City's porous defense, Tampa Bay (3-5) gained 41 yards and scored five touchdowns — both season bests — to win for the third time in four games after an 0-4 start.

The Chiefs (3-5) totaled 101 points and 1,130 yards in victories over Atlanta and Indianapolis the previous two weeks, and put up another big day statistically despite playing much of the second half without star running back Priest Holmes.

Trent Green threw for 369 yards and three touchdowns, but was intercepted by Jermaine Phillips in the end zone with under 6 minutes to go. Green was sacked on consecutive plays to end Kansas City's last threat near midfield.

"We really needed this game to prove we were serious about making the playoffs and more importantly, making a statement about where we wanted to go as a football team," Bucs quarterback Brian Griese said.

Griese completed 22 of 34 passes

for 296 yards, including touchdowns to Jameel Cook and tight end Ken Dilerger, who was left uncovered when he lined up split wide to the left at the Chiefs 3.

Coach Jon Gruden also used a wide of misdirection bootleg passes to keep the Chiefs off balance.

"We weren't able to adjust," Kansas City cornerback Jerome Woods said. "Gruden called a good game. But for one reason or another we weren't lining up right."

Holmes scored his 14th rushing TD of the season on a 2-yard run, but was on the sideline when the Bucs stopped Kansas City's last two drives. Holmes said he was hit on the right knee during the third quarter, but doesn't believe the injury is serious.

"The best thing to do is wait, sit out the rest of that game and then put a brace on it and see how well

I do as far as it tightening up over the next couple of days," said Holmes, who gained 282 yards and scored seven TDs against the Falcons and Colts.

The All-Pro finished with 59 yards on 16 carries and was replaced by Larry Johnson, who wasn't nearly as effective in gaining 21 yards on 10 carries.

"It was a huge loss. There's just so much he can do," said Green, who completed 32 of 42 passes and was intercepted twice. Pittman topped 100 yards rushing for the second straight game, finishing with 128 on 15 carries. He scored on a 1-yard run in the first quarter, then broke his 78-yarder on the second play of the third quarter to wipe out a 24-21 halftime deficit.

Pittman's third TD, on a 3-yard run, put Tampa Bay ahead for good with 11:50 left in the fourth quarter.

Decked out in orange, Bengals put squeeze on Cowboys

BY JOE KAY
The Associated Press

CINCINNATI — From their ultra-mod orange duds to their old-fashioned game plan, the Cincinnati Bengals sure looked a whole lot different.

The team they beat might be ready for some big changes, too.

Carson Palmer dinked and dunked and connected perfectly on his only long pass, a 76-yard touchdown strike to Matt Schobel that set up a 26-3 victory Sunday over the Dallas Cowboys.

Playing in orange jerseys for the first time in their history, the Bengals (3-5) finally got the look that has eluded them. They won with solid special teams, a firm defense and an offense that needed only one grand moment to win.

Essentially, they looked like a team that Marvin Lewis would coach.

"Oh yeah," said Palmer, who spent most of the game handing off and dumping off. "Coach Lewis is going to be fired up for a couple of weeks with the way our defense went out and shut them down."

Cowboys coach Bill Parcells is fired up, too, but for much different reasons.

Four losses in five games have left the Cowboys (3-5) with little hope of making the playoffs for a second straight season.

Instead, they look more like a team in disarray.

Victor Castverde, who turns 41 next Saturday, threw three interceptions and lost a fumble. The Cowboys couldn't even dent the NFL's worst run defense — Eddie George managed only 23 yards on eight carries.

The Bengals hadn't stifled an opponent so easily since a 38-3 win over expansion Houston on Nov. 3, 2002 — one of their two wins that season.

"I don't know where we go from here, if anywhere," Parcells said. "I really don't have much to say, fellows, except we were poorly prepared, we played poorly, we were inefficient and we were just awful."

Testaverde has thrown six interceptions in the last three games, partly a function of his injury-ravaged receiving corps. Keyshawn Johnson is the only experienced receiver at his disposal.

It showed. It may not have mattered.

"Injuries? Nobody cares about that," said Testaverde, who was 18-for-30 for 207 yards. "The guys that line up have to perform at a high level."

Cincinnati has relied way too much on Palmer in the season's first half, forcing him to try to lead fourth-quarter comebacks too much to ask of a novice quarterback.

This time, they got a win by asking him to do the minimum. He played mistake-free, completing 21 of 32 for 212 yards without a sack or interception.

Bears' defense takes five against Giants

Turnovers turn tide for Chicago as New York lets early 14-point lead slip away

By TOM CANAVAN

The Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — While it wasn't the old Chicago Bears' 46 defense, the way Lovie Smith's team played against the New York Giants brought back some memories.

The Bears forced five turnovers — three on consecutive New York plays in a 20-point rampage late in the first half — and beat the Giants 28-21 Sunday.

"That was just a great defensive effort," Smith said. "That is the type of defense we think we are capable of playing week in and week out."

The Bears (3-5) had seven sacks and limited the Giants (5-3) to 258 total yards in winning their second straight game. What made the performance even more remarkable was that Chicago spotted the Giants 14 points before turning things around with some great individual performances.

Defensive end Alex Brown had eight tackles and four sacks.

Safety Mike Green had eight tackles, two forced fumbles and one recovery. Nathan Vasher had a fumble recovery and an interception and fellow cornerback Jerry Azumah had four tackles, an interception and a forced fumble late in the first half.

The forced fumble came three plays after Vasher's apparent third touchdown of the first quarter was nullified by a holding penalty on Amani Toomer. Azumah then sacked Kurt Warner and forced a fumble that Vasher recovered.

The Giants' offense ground to a halt after that.

"I don't really know what sparked us," Azumah said. "They scored two quick touchdowns on us and we basically said 'Enough!'"



Chicago Bears cornerback Jerry Azumah reacts after intercepting a pass by New York Giants quarterback Kurt Warner in the second quarter during Sunday's game in East Rutherford, N.J. The Bears forced five turnovers to erase a 14-point deficit in the 28-21 victory.

Rookie Craig Krenzel got the Bears going with a 35-yard touchdown pass to Bernard Berrian with 5:13 to go in the half.

Anthony Thomas tied the game with a 4-yard walk-in TD two plays after Ike Hilliard fumbled at the Giants 29.

Interceptions by Vasher and Azumah on successive Giants' plays set up field goals of 22 and 21 yards in the final 69 seconds, putting Chicago ahead 20-14 at the half.

"They played the kind of game we have been playing, let the other guy lose the game," Giants coach Tom Coughlin said.

What made the defeat more frustrating was that NFC East leader Philadelphia (7-1) lost earlier in the day.

The loss was the second straight embarrassing setback at home for the Giants, who got off to a good start this season by winning the turnover battles. They have a minus-6 takeaway differential in losing at home to Detroit and Chicago. Sandwiched between those games was an impressive win at Minnesota.

New York, which came into the game

with an NFC-best plus-12 takeaway differential, also had 14 penalties for 109 yards.

"It was ugly," guard Jason Whittle said. "We couldn't get anything going. It seemed like we lost our poise and our cool. We just didn't play smart. They outplayed us all over the place."

The Giants, who used good field position to take an early lead on TD runs of 3 yards and 1 yard by Barber, had a chance to tie the game late after Thomas scored on a 41-yard run and Krenzel ran for a 2-point conversion for a 28-14 Chicago lead.

Warner (18-of-36 for 195 yards) cut the gap to seven points with a 1-yard touchdown pass to Jeremy Shockey with 1:56 to play. New York got a final chance when Jack Brewer recovered the onside kick.

But Warner was sacked two more times, and the Bears ran out the clock.

"This is a big win, I don't think anyone gave us a chance to come in here and do this," Green said. "This is a big momentum shifter and we're on a roll."

Warner, who threw two interceptions and lost two fumbles, now has been sacked 33 times this season.

"That was a good football team, a good defensive football team that came out and did some good things," Warner said of the Bears.

"But there is no excuse for us not being able to handle it."

Coughlin admitted he thought about using No. 1 draft pick Eli Manning in relief, but he let Warner finish. Warner will start next week at Arizona, Coughlin said.

The Giants also have to contend about Pro Bowl offensive end Michael Strahan. He left the game in the third quarter after straining a pectoral muscle on his right side and probably will have an MRI on Monday.

Record interception return thwarts Browns' comeback

By DAVID GINSBURG

The Associated Press

BALTIMORE — The play will be recorded in the record book as the longest interception return in NFL history, a 106-yard sprint by Ed Reed that sealed a harrowing victory for the Baltimore Ravens.

Aaron Shea will forever remember it as pass interference.

With the Cleveland Browns driving for the tying score, Reed picked off Jeff Garcia's pass in the end zone and went the distance to secure a 27-13 victory Sunday night.

Reed intercepted a pass that went off Shea, whose attempt to

catch the ball was impeded by Baltimore linebacker Ray Lewis. As Reed made his way down the right sideline, Shea yelled at a nearby official, pleading for a call that never came.

"When you're touched before the ball gets there, it makes it a little tougher to catch," Shea said. "I think the guy was there early."

Reed reached the end zone with 26 seconds left, and the Browns (3-5) were done.

"It's a blessing, definitely a miracle if you knew what happened the whole play, with Ray telling me to be where I got the ball," Reed said.

"I knew exactly the play they

were going to try to run," Lewis said. "I told Ed it was coming."

Jamal Lewis scored the decisive touchdown with 7:03 left following a 7-yard punt, and Reed made the score stand up in a game in which the Ravens (5-3) yielded a 93-yard kickoff return but came back on the strength of their special teams.

Back from a two-game suspension for violating the league's substance abuse policy, Lewis ran for 81 yards on 22 carries. But his 2-yard burst into the end zone was set up by two outstanding plays by Baltimore's special units.

First, rookie B.J. Sams made a

diving save in the end zone to enable Baltimore to down a punt at the Cleveland 1. Then, after the defense yielded only a yard on three plays, the Ravens pressured Derrick Frost into a wobbly kick that made the touchdown drive easy.

"I was trying to get it off quick. I saw the guy coming up the middle," Frost said. "It's all about timing. ... I knew it was going to be bad, but not that bad."

A 2-point conversion gave Baltimore a 20-13 lead, but victory was not assured until Reed intercepted the deflected pass.

"He seems to always be around it when you need it," Baltimore coach Brian Billick said. "He

kind of waited to the end to do it. Might have saved my heart a little bit if he'd done it earlier."

Matt Stover kicked four field goals for the Ravens, who wore black uniforms for the first time.

"The defense time and time again stepped up to the challenge. We put it on the 5-yard line and they still somehow got it done," Stover said.

Richard Alston stunned the Ravens and the crowd of 69,781 by putting Baltimore in a 70-hole with 14 seconds elapsed. He shook off an attempted tackle by Chad Williams, then dived for Wade Richey around midfield before veering right and sprinting down the sideline into the end zone.

Sunday's NFL stars:

Quarterbacks

■ Ben Roethlisberger, Steelers, threw two touchdown passes in a 27-3 win over Philadelphia. He has now thrown 10 consecutive TD passes, matching the longest streak by a rookie quarterback since Peyton Manning's 1970. Mike Kruczyk was 6-for-9 for the Steelers in 1970 while filling in for an injured Terry Bradshaw.

■ Drew Brees, Chargers, threw four touchdown passes during a 43-17 rout of New Orleans. He has 18 TD passes this season and only three interceptions.

■ Jake Plummer, Broncos, threw for four scores without an interception in a 31-13 victory over Houston.

■ Trent Green, Chiefs, threw for 369 yards and three touchdowns in a 34-21 loss to Tampa Bay.



Receivers

■ Rod Smith, Broncos, set team records for career receptions and TD catches during a 31-13 win over Houston after making his 67th catch, he later grabbed the 56th touchdown toss — Smith moved past Shannon Sharpe in both categories.

■ Antonio Gates, Chargers, caught three TD passes during a 43-17 romp over New Orleans. The last San Diego tight end to grab three touchdown tosses was Kellen Winslow in 1983.

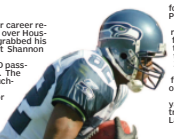
■ Santana Moss, Jets, caught six passes for 157 yards and a touchdown in New York's 22-17 loss to Buffalo.

■ Darrell Jackson, Seahawks, had five catches for 114 yards and two TDs in a 42-27 victory over the 49ers.

Running backs

■ Michael Pittman, Buccaneers, scored on a 10-yard, career-long yard run. He finished with three touchdowns and 128 yards in a 34-31 win over Kansas City.

■ Jerome Bettis, Steelers, rumbled



for 149 yards on 33 carries in a 27-3 win over Philadelphia.

■ Willie McGahee, Bills, ran for a career-high 132 yards and a touchdown as Buffalo beat the Jets 22-17.

■ Clinton Portis, Redskins, ran for 147 yards on 34 carries in a 17-13 win over Detroit. He also took the first career TD pass, hitting Laveranues Coles for a 15-yard touchdown.

Special teams

■ Ed Reed, Ravens, set an NFL record by returning an interception 106 yards — ending Baltimore's bid for a game-tying TD in the final minute — in Baltimore's 27-13 victory over Cleveland.

■ Adam Vinatieri, Patriots, kicked four field goals during the game's first career TD pass on a fake in a 40-22 win at St. Louis. Vinatieri hit Troy Brown for a 4-yard score.

SPORTS



Texas pushes Utah
out of big-money slot,
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Another perfect ending

Steelers go two-for-two against unbeaten teams

BY ALAN ROBINSON
The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — The Pittsburgh Steelers made certain there's nobody unbeaten now in the NFL, except for Ben Roethlisberger.

The Steelers combined their still-flawless new quarterback with a touch of the old — a Jerome Bettis of yesteryear and a defense that was Steel Curtain-tough — to dominate the Philadelphia Eagles 27-3 Sunday and leave the NFL without an undefeated team.

The Steelers (7-1) ended the Ea-

gles' seven-game winning streak a week after halting New England's record 21-game winning streak with an equally impressive 34-20 victory. Pittsburgh is the only team in NFL history to stop unbeaten teams in consecutive weeks after each had won at least six games.

"Nobody ever thought we'd do this," said Hines Ward, who scored the first two touchdowns. "We're giving defensive coordinators heck trying to figure out what we're going to do, with weapons all over the field and a quarterback who just keeps getting better."

How much better can Big Ben get than this? Roethlisberger is 6-0 as a starter — the first rookie to do that since Pittsburgh's Mike Kruczek filled in for an injured Terry Bradshaw in 1976.

Here's the difference: Kruczek didn't throw a TD pass all season on a team that won behind the Steel Curtain; Roethlisberger (11-for-18, 183 yards, two touchdowns) has thrown for 11 touchdowns while playing with the polish and growing confidence of a much more experienced player.

"He's remarkable," Eagles line-backer Mark Simoneau said.

"Look at him on the field and he doesn't look like a rookie, he looks like a guy who's been around four or five years. Give the guy credit, he made plays all day long."

Roethlisberger drove the Steelers to a 21-0 lead on their first three possessions with the help of Bettis' 149 yards, his 55th career 100-yard game.

Ward scored on the first two drives, a 16-yard reverse and a 20-yard reception, then playfully mocked the Eagles (7-1) and star receiver Terrell Owens by flapping his arms Owens-like in the end zone each time.

SEE PERFECT ON PAGE 27

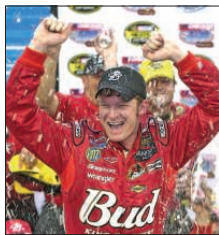


A Steelers fan holds a sign behind the Eagles bench in the final minutes of Pittsburgh's 27-3 victory on Sunday — Philadelphia's first loss of the season.

Bearing down



Bears defensive end Adewale Ogunleye hits Giants quarterback Kurt Warner after Warner had released the ball, drawing a 15-yard penalty. Chicago's defense forced five turnovers and sacked Warner seven times in the upset victory. See Page 31 for details.



Earnhardt wins in Phoenix to make a race of the Chase

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Lakers snap skid; Sonics push past Spurs

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Goosen surges past faltering Woods in Tour Championship

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